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AN

ORIGINAL ESSAY

ON THE

IMMATERIALITY & IMMORTALITY

OF THE

HUMAN SOUL,

FOUNDED SOLELY ON

PHYSICAL AND RATIONAL PRINCIPLES.

BY S. DREW.

.....Why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis Heav'n itself that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man:
Eternity! thou pleasing, dreadful thought!
Through what variety of untry'd being,
Through what new scenes and changes must we pass
The wide, the unbounded prospect lies before me;
But shadows, clouds and darkness rest upon it.
Here will I hold..... ADDISON.

FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.

BALTIMORE:

PUBLISHED BY A. NEAL, BOOKSELLER, NO. 1 WATER STREET.

S. Magill, Printer.

1810.

" THIS Essay is introduced to the world under the auspices of the Rev. JOHN WHITAKER, the great and good Rector of *Ruan Lanyhorne;* to whom it is dedicated in a very handsome manner. The address, indeed, is well conceived and well expressed. The Preface is elegant and appropriate.

In the first part of the Essay, Mr. DREW has successfully proved, that "there is an IMMATERIAL PRINCIPLE in man." In the second part, therefore, his inquiry is; "Can this IMMATERIAL PRINCIPLE possibly EXPIRE?"

[After giving a pretty copious Extract from the Work, the Reviewers conclude with the following remarks:]

"An attempt to *decide* on the future life of Brutes," says our Author, "in a few straggling propositions, would be both immodest and indiscreet."

With respect to "the future life" of the Essay before us, we would use the same language. We cannot pretend to *decide*, absolutely, on the degree of merit which it possesses; or the rank which it will hereafter hold in the metaphysical world. We have discovered, we think, a few errors in the reasoning; but we have found much to applaud—much to admire. Of his subject, in general, the Author is a master. Whilst we are struck with a chain of argumentation, strong and beautiful, we are assured, that this is the production of no common writer. And in thus connecting the Author with his Work, we cannot but recollect with wonder, that he is the untutored child of nature; deriving no advantage from education; indebted only and immediately to Heaven for a reach of thought *astonishingly great!*—for a MIND to which all the matter of the Universe seems but an atom; and in himself, exhibiting a splendid proof, that the soul of man is IMMORTAL!"

ANTIJACOBIN REVIEW, for *February*, 1803.

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PREFACE.

AMONG that infinite variety of abstract truths which the God of Heaven has placed within the reach of human investigation, there are but few more pleasing to a contemplative mind than the *natural Immortality of the Human Soul.* To the gratification which results from such a contemplation, the Author of our being has been pleased to unite our most important interests; and has placed the *immortality of the human soul* among those truths which it is at once our duty and privilege to explore in our present state of being; and our felicity to enjoy through all eternity.

A subject which thus becomes interesting from its own importance, must be applicable to mankind in all ages of the world, and can only lose its energy when we lose our being. If, however, from the chequered state of human life, any one period can advance a claim in preference to another, it must be in an age, when infidelity, under the apparent sanction of philosophy, attempts to impose itself upon the credulous and the unthinking. It is in this age that we live.

When principles appeal to our passions, under the auspices of Reason, and yet leave the

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understanding uninfluenced by their efficacy, they carry with them a presumptive evidence, that error lies concealed behind the mask. The principles of French philosophy answer this description, and therefore justify this conclusion. They fascinate with a specious appearance, and by gratifying the corrupted passions to which they appeal, they conceal their delusive tendencies under the visor which they wear. Error chiefly becomes formidable from its concealment, and a detection of falsehood generally dispels its charm. And were infidelity to disclose its horrors, it would cease to operate upon the minds of men. Defeated in its native form, it approaches us in habiliments which are less questionable; and enters, unperceived, the unguarded avenues of the heart. In this strange delirium of the mind, we become captivated with the novelty of new ideas, and mistake a paroxism of soul for an intellectual acquisition.

The progress of French philosophy, has, perhaps, been more destructive than her arms. By appealing to the more vulnerable parts of human nature, we suffer our principles to be undermined by imperceptible degrees, till we barter truth for error; and, by adopting sentiments which originate a few shades beneath the surfaces of things, a superficial mind is tempted to place the reasoning by which it has been seduced among the recondite depths of science.

The principles of *Rousseau* on education, if indiscriminately adopted, will prepare the youth-

ful mind for that ridicule which marks the pages of *Voltaire*;* and the mind which can cherish the ridicule of the latter without remorse, is sufficiently prepared for the false philosophy of *Marat* and *Volney*, and bids fair for the adoption of the bare-faced impudence of *Thomas Paine*.

It is thus the principles of posterity become poisoned at the fountain-head. And while under the sanction of a *Bolingbroke* or a *Shaftesbury*, the insidious volumes of similar writers have been calling in question those truths which we have been taught to revere as sacred and incontrovertible; it is to be lamented that men of erudition and splendid talents, who profess themselves christians, have lent their pens—"to "point a moral, or adorn a tale!" This stricture may seem severe. I should gratify my feelings in softening its rigour, but the fact is self-evident, and I draw the comparison with the deepest regret.

In all ages of the world a general belief has prevailed, that man must survive the grave. This sentiment is inculcated so early as the days of Homer, in—

"That wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's gloomy reign
"The *souls* of mighty chiefs, untimely slain;

* The name of this great bad man but seldom passes through my mind, without bringing with it that laconic but pointed character given of him by Mr. Cowper. His character of *M. de Voltaire* is, that he
"*Liv'd long, wrote much, laughed heartily, and died!*"

" Whose limbs, unburied, on the naked shore,
" Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore."

On the presumption of this general truth, the idea of future consciousness is founded, and consequently of rewards and punishments in another life. From this source, those systems of morality have been drawn by those venerable sages of antiquity, whose writings have illuminated the Pagan world. And while arguments and authority have both conspired to establish this general truth, and define the boundaries of human action; a full conviction of its being true, has afforded us that immovable basis on which we rest our hopes and fears.

It is indeed to be lamented, that while these truths have obtained the general suffrage, the world has not been without exceptions to universal belief. Whether the insufficiency of evidence, or some unaccountable deformity in the human intellect; whether the novelty of being singular, a determined resolution to resist those restraints which a conviction of these truths would impose; or a lazy apathy which freezes the mental powers, may claim the primary station in the black catalogue of causes; are points of speculation which it might be useful to explore. Whatever the cause or causes are, certain it is, that an apparent fatality extends its influence to a certain description of men, who seem to place their defence in the blandishments of wit, and derive their security from the sorceries of applause.

In proportion as science has enlightened the human mind, an attack on these truths has naturally been succeeded by an examination of first principles; opposition has produced defence, and life and immortality have been brought to light by the gospel. The day of general controversy has long been past, and peace has been the happy result of demonstration.

In this state of tranquillity, when the ground of infidelity was no longer tenable, and opposition became too feeble to keep alive debate, the *rational* methods of defence were lost, with many, in the blaze of demonstration; and the arguments which proved the soul to be immortal, were forgotten in the full conviction of its being true. An Atheist, like a solitary meteor, might have wandered through a century, and excited the mixed emotions of astonishment and contempt.

The concluding years of the eighteenth century, have, however, presented us with a different aspect. The revolution in France has extended itself to the departments of literature, and moral philosophy has undergone a considerable change. The contagion has been communicated across the water. In England we have been told that the human soul "is nothing "but *matter*;" and in France we are informed, that "*death is an eternal sleep.*" A *Godwin* has told us, that "*duty is the bugbear of the igno-* "*rant*;" and a *Marat* has assured us, that "*pi-* "*ty is not a native of the human breast.*" The doubts which have been started by *Hume* and

Hobbes, have been improved by *Priestley* and *Barlow*, and diffused through every order of society, by emissaries of the present day. Infidelity is a pernicious evil. The different branches into which it shoots, are but distinct parts of one great whole. And whether infidelity approach us in the stern philosophy of a *Priestly*, or in the scepticism of a *Rousseau*; in the polite ignorance of a *Volney*, or the naked blasphemy of *Thomas Paine*, the identity of its nature is not thereby changed. The streams may be different, but they all originate in one common fountain, and all terminate in one general issue.

To sit as idle spectators on the issue of these commotions, is no longer a matter of indifference; but to be active in the cause of truth is a duty which every man owes to his God and to his country, to himself and to posterity; and that man must be deficient in the discharge of his duty, who, to the utmost of his power, will not exert himself to check the progress of so destructive an evil.

Under the influence of this principle, I have been led from traditionary belief, to an investigation of first principles, and the result of my inquiries is,—a full conviction that rational principles must support the fact. The arguments which have produced that conviction, I have committed to writing, and am now about to commit them to the world. The modes of reasoning, therefore, which I have adopted, are founded upon no preconceived hypothesis; and

the arguments as well as manner, are equally new to me.

On a subject so awful, I am well assured that the ground on which I tread, is, if possible, more than sacred; but whatever be the issue, I shall have this consolation,—that I have done my best, and meant it well. To pretend to be without all emotion on the issue of this Essay, I should betray my vanity in professing. I have sensations on the occasion which I feel it difficult to describe; and I place the internal conflict of my bosom, among those indescribables, which may naturally be conceived on such an occasion, to occupy the mind of man.

My feelings revolt at the idea of publishing an Essay on such a subject while I am writing this Preface; yet the importance of the subject suggests these ideas;—If I succeed in my main propositions, I shall feel myself amply recompensed for my present perturbations; if not, the *occasion* itself will soften the mortification of disgrace.

It is not, however, to my own feelings, but, to the public judgment that I appeal.

A subject so abstruse in its nature, and whose consequences extend to a future state of being, must necessarily impress some obscurities on the manner of its pursuit: I have avoided all in my power, and yet many, perhaps, remain. It must, however, be remembered,—that our inability to comprehend a fact, is no argument against the fact itself. The ploughshare of reason may be driven through the rocks of error,

although every reader may not be able to discern the furrow which it makes.

Far be it from me to insinuate, that I have said all that might be said, or anticipated every objection which may be started; but truths can never oppose each other; and if the arguments which I have adduced to establish my main propositions be conclusive, every objection, however plausible, must lose its force. On such a subject, new arguments are continually starting to a contemplative mind; and whether the *importance* or *extension* of this subject be the greatest, it is, perhaps, hard to say; but in favour of an important subject, he that advances any thing new, adds to the general stock of argument; and he that adds to the general stock of argument, adds to the general benefit of mankind.

Let it not be thought because I have declined all appeal to the Sacred Volume, that I have therefore drawn over the book of God the most distant shade of disrespect. The mind that can harbour such an idea, must form but a very partial conception of my undertaking. The Bible I consider as the great repository of sacred knowledge; and moral philosophy can be no longer right, than while it acts in concert with revelation. I consider moral truth, as an elevated mountain, the summit of which, Revelation unveils to the eye of faith, without involving us in the tedious drudgery of painful speculations. To some of these views philosophy will direct us, through a labyrinth of intricacies;

and after the human understanding has put forth all her efforts, it is "by toil and art the "steep ascent we gain." If, however, in any given momentous instance, the tardy movements of philosophy will lead us to the same conclusions which the Bible has already formed, it affords us no contemptible evidence of its authenticity; and Revelation challenges our belief in those instances where we can trace no relation.

The ground on which I have assumed the present question, is simply this—Have we, or have we not, any rational evidence of the soul's immortality, admitting that no revelation had ever been given us from God? If we have, infidelity loses one of its strongest fortresses; if not, all rational proof of the immortality of the soul is at once done away.

Whether the present Work, like those bubbles on the passing stream, which float along and then expire, will engross the attention of mankind only for a moment, and then disappear; or pass onward to ages which its author can never reach, are points which events can alone decide. I have not vanity enough to presume, that infallibility has impressed her footsteps upon every sentence which I have written; the arguments, however, are such as have produced conviction in my own mind, from a persuasion that they arise from the fixed relations of things. I have attempted to erect this fabric on such facts and propositions as are incontrovertible, and have traced the intermediate ideas

which appeared to have stood in contact with one another, to that conclusion which I had in view.

To those who are skilled in the critical accuracies of grammar, my language may sound harsh and unharmonious, and some solecisms may appear; but the *real* critic, and the candid of every description, I am persuaded will readily make allowances for these imperfections, when they consider my situation in life, and the disadvantages under which I have written.

I have no apology to offer; I publish with diffidence, but I publish with deliberation; I solicit no favour which justice and candour will not entitle me to claim, and which I have been more than once convinced the public are ready to bestow.

Should what I have written be made instrumental in reclaiming but *one* from the fangs of infidelity, or in preventing another from becoming its victim; it will afford me a consolation which will accompany me through life, and I hope, be remembered with gratitude through all eternity.

AN

ORIGINAL ESSAY.

PART I.

ILLUSTRATION OF THE IMMATERIALITY OF THE HUMAN SOUL.

CHAP. I.

OF MATTER.

SECT. I.

Every thing in Nature included within the confines of Matter and Spirit.—Man consists both of Matter and Spirit.—Substance defined.

IN the vast empire of created nature, there are but two primary substances with which we are acquainted, which have in themselves a positive existence, and these are, MATTER and SPIRIT.—Within the confines of these two substances, all species of Being, whether animate or inanimate, as well as the individuals of each species, claim their existence, and ultimately resolve themselves. And although the diversified scenery of nature, may furnish the senses with an infinite variety, yet these two substances are invariably, in their physical natures, the same; and the phenomenon of nature is nothing more than the distinct modifications under which these substances are presented, through the senses, to the intellectual powers.

These two substances have their beings independent of each other, having properties which are totally distinct, and which they cannot partake in common with one another.*

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*In the commencement of this Essay, it will instantly occur to the intelligent reader, that I have either designedly deviated from the common path in which many writers on this subject have walked, or that I have been guilty of a flagrant omission. It may not, therefore, be unnecessary in this place to avow, that the former has been the case.

It has frequently been asserted—that man is a threefold compound, consisting of *body*, *soul*, and *spirit*;—that the *body* is formed of gross corporeal particles; that the *spirit* is pure intelligence; and, that the *soul* is a kind of ethereal vehicle, in which the spirit is enclosed, in order to its union with the grosser compages of the body. Such is the notion of *body*, *soul*, and *spirit*!

Perhaps an inability to comprehend, how *pure spirit* could be immediately connected with particles so gross as those of which the human body is composed, may be among the primary causes of this theory of man.—And hence the conception of this *ethereal vehicle*, which is presumed to act as a medium between these two distant natures.

That we cannot conceive how two natures, so physically distant from each other, as matter and spirit, can be immediately united, is a truth which I readily admit; but I fear that the admission of an ethereal vehicle, will give the difficulty no solution. The sublimation of matter can never destroy any of its permanent properties, nor in any wise change the identity of its nature. Let any given portion of matter pass either through an alembic of alchymy, or an alembic of the mind, the same conclusion must inevitably follow: *There can be nothing but matter which refinement can leave behind, and there is nothing but matter which refinement can take away.* The only changes which refinement can

The design of the following pages is to make a rational inquiry into the existence of these substances, to point out a few of the most distinguishing properties of these distant natures, and appropriate to each a few of those discriminating properties from whence their distinct natures are denominated and known;—properties which are at once inseparable from the substances in which they inhere, and inapplicable to each other.

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produce in matter, are, an alteration of its specific quantity, or a new arrangement of its component parts; but how this new arrangement of parts, or alteration in quantity, can render it more capable of an immediate alliance with pure spirit, I confess myself wholly unable to discern. The *rarest* atmosphere with which we are acquainted, can be no nearer in point of nature to pure spirit, than a rock of adamant; and we can no more conceive how an alliance can be effected with the one than with the other. The union of two distinct natures, which in themselves have no relation to one another, can never be produced by any thing in the natures themselves, and can be ascribable only to the power of that God, to whom all things are possible.

However much refined the *soul* or ethereal vehicle may be, certain it is, that it must be either *matter* or *spirit*; if the former, we are exactly at the same loss to account for its union with *pure spirit*, as we are for that of the body, if we suppose no such thing as an ethereal vehicle to exist. If, on the contrary, we suppose the *soul* to be *spirit*, the same difficulty meets us in another stage; for although we might be able to assign some reasons how a *spiritual substance* could be enclosed within a *spiritual vehicle*, yet how a spiritual vehicle can unite with the gross matter of our bodies, I fear we shall feel ourselves rather at a loss to say. The admission, therefore, of a third principle in the compound of man, appears in my view, to add to the embarrassments which are necessarily included in

It is foreign to my present design to investigate all those properties, which may either positively or relatively claim their existence in these substances; my aim being only to ascertain certain prominent features by which these separate natures may be distinguished from one another.

It is certain, that whatsoever is an essential property of any substance, must be always applicable to that substance—applicable to each species which it includes, to each individual of that species, and inseparable from it; to suppose otherwise is a contradiction; for if any property can be separated from that nature which it is essential to the existence of, the property so separated, is no longer es-

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the union, without affording us a single ray of light, or removing a single obstacle. I shall therefore use the words *soul* and *spirit* indiscriminately through this Essay, and consider its union with the *body* among those mysteries which human ingenuity can never penetrate, and which must forever rest in the eternal God.

It has, indeed, been said, that unless pure spirit be enclosed in a vehicle which is material, we cannot conceive how pure spirit can be rendered visible to our bodily organs But surely this is not the language either of reason or philosophy If the souls of the departed be ever rendered visible to our bodily organs, it must be through the agency of supernatural power; and to attempt to account upon natural principles, for a phenomenon which is admitted to be supernatural, is to destroy the very foundation upon which an apparition is supposed to stand. The very moment we can account for the *visibility* of spirit upon principles of reason, from that very moment it ceases to be supernatural; and by attempting to make *that* to be *natural*, which we admit to be *supernatural*, we attempt to account for *that* which we admit to be unaccountable.

sential to the existence of that nature; and we are led to this conclusion,—that it is an essential property, and not an essential property at the same time.

I cannot doubt, but that both *matter* and *spirit*, have a variety of latent powers, which may for ever elude the researches of finite penetration, and, in their physical origin, rest for ever in the Great Supreme. Nevertheless, we behold in each of them a variety of emanations, from whence we obtain the knowledge of the certainty of their existence, while the primary qualities, together with the substances in which all known properties inhere, must remain permanent in themselves, in order to the emission of those sensible qualities, which are invariably the same, and from whence we denominate both *matter* and *spirit*.

But while the Almighty God has made these substances distinct from one another, and incorporated with them certain primary qualities which are necessarily co-essential with themselves, and incommunicable to each other, the *substratum* or *substances* in which these qualities exist, are concealed from the researches of philosophy, if not placed beyond the reach of all finite comprehension.

It is from observing the differences in these qualities, that we know to what substance they belong, and from thence we decide whether the substance be *spiritual* or *material*.

I had long thought, when revolving these abstruse subjects in my mind, that the term *substance* was inapplicable to any thing of an immaterial nature; but if I mistake not, Mr. *Locke*, in one of his letters to the Bishop of Worcester, observes, "that the term substance, when thus applied, is "only used to express that nameless something, in "which those qualities exist which we perceive, "and is used thus, for want of a more expressive term."

Dr. *Watts* also says, "a substance is a Being "which can subsist by itself, without dependance "upon any other created being. The notion of "subsisting by itself, gives occasion to logicians to "call it substance."*

From these definitions given by Mr. *Locke* and Dr. *Watts*, if I understand their words aright, it evidently appears that the term *substance*, is not necessarily confined within the limits of corporiety, but may be with equal propriety applied to any thing which includes within its nature the idea of self-subsistence, though to corporeal Being, that nature bears no physical relation. If then we feel within ourselves the two ideas of *consciousness* and *perception*, the mind is necessarily conducted to some substance in which *consciousness* and *perception* claim their inherence, and without which

* The general definition which has been given to substance, is, *that it is that which supports accidents.* I see nothing *erroneous* in this definition, but I conceive that it is *defective.* For if the idea of its supporting accidents, be admitted as a *full definition of substance*, I humbly conceive that it will be attended with some difficulties to distinguish *substance* from the *primary modification* of it. For although in a primary sense, all *accidents* are supported by *substance*, yet in a secondary sense the *modification* of substance is essentially necessary to the existence of some accidents which we perceive resulting from that peculiar modification; and the shades which divide these two species of accidents, are so *minute* and *imperceptible*, that the mind is oppressed with difficulties in drawing that line of demarkation which divides them from one another. But in admitting the definition here given by Mr *Locke* and Dr *Watts*, the horizon is widened, and a larger latitude is assumed, which, while it includes all that is comprehended in the former definition, avoids those difficulties which are inseparable from it.

it is impossible they could have either a positive or relative existence. For should we admit the existence of *consciousness* and *perception*, and yet attempt to deny the existence of a conscious and perceptive *substance*, these absurdities will immediately follow:—If consciousness and perception be admitted to exist abstracted from all inherence in a substance, (which existence is supposed under the present consideration) they must include within themselves the nature of self-subsistence, and must for that reason exist abstracted from their own activity, (for without this the idea of *self-subsistence* is done away); but admitting consciousness and perception to exist abstracted from their own activity, we are obliged to admit the existence of an *unconscious consciousness*, and a *perception* which does not *perceive*. In pursuing these absurdities we must be led also to deny the necessary connexion which must subsist between those mental powers which we feel; for if *consciousness* can include within it the idea of *self-subsistence*, it may be separated from all the other powers of the soul, which while it destroys its unity must also annihilate its identity.

Such are the absurdities which must result from the supposition that the soul is not a substance, or a something distinct at least in idea, from that *consciousness* and *perception*, which are and must be qualities of it. And whether the soul be matter or spirit, certain it is, that as these faculties cannot include within themselves the nature of *self-subsistence*, some substance must be admitted to exist, in which alone these properties can inhere.

If, then, the term *substance* may be applied both to *corporeal* and *incorporeal Being*, I shall, in the following pages, use the term indiscriminately, as expressing that *something* in which those qualities inhere, that are essential to those natures of which I may have occasion to speak.

SECT. II.

Nature and essential Properties of Matter.

WHATEVER is material, must have all those properties which are essential to its nature, because, it is from these essential properties that its nature is both denominated and known. Among those properties which are necessary to the existence of matter, may be included its *solidity*, its *magnitude* and *figure*. Without these distinguishing properties, we can form no conception of any thing that is material, and in what subject soever we find these properties, from that discovery we denominate this substance to be material. Nor are these properties mere accidents of matter. The impossibility of conceiving any thing which is material, to exist where these properties are not; will satisfactorily prove that they are essential to its nature, and therefore necessary to its existence. For if any given portion of matter, though never so *minute*, can be conceived to exist, (though it have undergone every modification of which it is capable in the endless series of divisibility) still these properties must invariably adhere to its minutest parts, and are as applicable to an atom as to a globe. Neither is it possible for us to conceive a separation between them. Where there is *solidity*, there must be *magnitude*, and where there is magnitude, there must be *figure*; and if we could conceive either of these qualities to be annihilated, the others must necessarily perish with it. The infinite divisibility which matter is capable of undergoing, cannot affect its permanent qualities; each particle is an equal partaker, and where these qualities are supposed to be annihilated, there the idea of matter can be no more.

In addition to this, all matter must be *extended* in proportion to its *magnitude*. For, if we substract the idea of *exstension* from any material substance,

the ideas of *solidity*, *magnitude*, and *figure*, must perish with it, and the mind is left in possession of a perfect *nonentity*. The idea of matter is also necessarily connected with that of space; not, that space is an essential property of matter, or to be reckoned amongst its modes or accidents, but it is that *pure expansion* in which all substances must exist. The identity of pure space can be no otherwise affected by matter, than, that it is engrossed or empty in proportion to its presence or absence; and in proportion as space is devoid of matter, matter is devoid of existence. If, then, matter cannot exist abstracted from those given spaces which it occupies, space itself must be necessary to the existence of matter, although it is not an essential property of its nature. And as the ideas of *solidity*, *magnitude*, *figure*, and *extension*, are all necessary to our idea of matter, and are inseparable from it, and from each other; it follows, that matter, under every mode of divisibility which it is capable of undergoing, must be a *solid*, *extended*, *divisible substance*, always partaking of *magnitude* and *figure*. Indeed, *magnitude* and *figure* are but mere properties, and therefore can have but relative existences; and whenever we form conceptions of them, we mention them in relation to some *substance* in which they inhere; and if we destroy that relation, we can no more form an idea of either, than we can of *black*, *blue*, or *red*, without having a reference to some portion of matter in which these colours exist by inherence, which every one knows is totally impossible.

SECT. III.

There may be Spiritual Substances, although we be ignorant of their Essences.

Not only the existence of matter is so evident that it admits of sensible proof,—but there are spiritual substances, which also must have a positive existence; though by being incapable of communicating themselves through the medium of sensation like matter, they are more remote from common apprehension. Distance in nature, is, however, no more a proof of the nonexistence of *spirit*, than distance in space is a proof of the nonexistence of *matter*. Positive existence can have no relation, either to distance or perception: it is true, that clearness of apprehension communicates to the mind the idea of *assurance*, and this assurance the certainty of its Being; but Being itself, exists independent either of our clearness of apprehension, or our assurance of the certainty of its existence. Not only so, but whatsoever has a positive existence, must have existed antecedently to our apprehension of it; because apprehension, in its very nature, supposes the pre-existence of that which is apprehended; for to suppose it possible, for us to have an apprehension of what had not a previous existence, is to suppose we can apprehend what has no existence, which includes this contradiction, that we can apprehend, that of which it is impossible for us to have the most distant apprehension.

Hence, then, it follows, that there may be substances, the *natures* of which, although totally *unknown*, may nevertheless be certain and positive; and certain qualities in those substances, with which we are unacquainted, that are too remote for the human intellect to grasp. For, as our perception of existence depends upon existence itself for its own being, and not existence upon our per-

ception of it, nothing more is necessary to our certainty of the existence of an immaterial substance, than some line which will lead us with precision to that spiritual source from whence it emanated.—And if in exploring these intellectual regions, but one ray can be found, which will infallibly lead us to the genuine source from whence it sprung, it is sufficient to all the purposes of demonstration; and that demonstration will as infallibly prove both the real existence and nature of that source, as if it had been an object of animal sensation.

That matter does exist, has been already admitted and defined; and, that spiritual substances exist also, is a truth no less certain: it is true, we can by no means comprehend the physical nature of spirit, neither can we comprehend that of matter; but this want of comprehension, no more precludes the possibility of the existence of the former, than the latter. That secret extended *something*, in which magnitude and figure inhere, has hitherto eluded the researches of philosophy, and rendered itself known by those properties only, which are at once essential to, and inseparable from its nature; and, in like manner, the real essences of all spiritual substances, are in themselves unknown to the human mind, and the substance itself is demonstrated to exist, only by those emanations which we discover in the faculties of our own minds, which matter is incapable of producing, and which therefore can flow from no other than a *spiritual substance.*

It is certain, from what has been already said, that wherever *consciousness* and *perception* are found to exist, they plainly demonstrate the existence of some common principle in which they inhere, to which they belong, and from which they are inseparable. For could we suppose that there might be *consciousness* and *perception*, while we deny the existence of a conscious and perceiving

principle in which they inhere; we should be under the necessity of admitting that there may be consciousness, while nothing is supposed to be conscious, and that there may be perception, although there be nothing which perceives. If, then, it can be proved, that consciousness and perception do exist, it necessarily follows that there must be some primary *principle* from whence they flow, some *substance* in which they inhere, and without which they could have no relative existence: and to trace this consciousness to its substance, to examine whether this substance be *material* or *immaterial*, is one principal design which I propose to myself in the following sheets.

When the infinitely wise God, for physical reasons which he has thought proper to conceal from us, called into existence a race of beings, which he has denominated human; he united in this link in the vast chain of Being, those different qualities, from the existence of which we denominate both *matter* and *spirit*. How this strange connection is formed, or by what secret ties these distant natures are united together, is not placed within the reach of human discernment to discover; nor is the discovery thereof anywise concerned in the subject which lies before us. That Man, with respect to his body, is material, no one can doubt; we partake, in common with all other given portions of matter, all its essential properties. Our bodies partake of magnitude and figure; they are necessarily extended; and they occupy empty space. This is so evident, that proof itself would be an insult on so clear a point.

In addition to those corporeal parts of which our bodies are composed, every man feels within himself, an evident consciousness of his own existence. We perceive the existence of material objects by sensation; and by recollecting the past, and anticipating the future, we take into one view the re-

lations which subsist between things, and discover the necessary connexion which there is between certain *causes* and their *effects*.

SECT. IV.

Volition, Judgment, and Perception, having no positive Existence, demonstrate the positive Existence of Substance.—Substance farther defined.

While the ideas of consciousness and perception are admitted to exist, the understanding is necessarily carried, in a retrospective manner, to some *substance* in which these properties unite together; and at the same time is carried forward to some certain object of which we are conscious, and which we must perceive. To suppose otherwise, would be to suppose that we were conscious without being conscious of any thing, and that we perceived without having any perception. If then, consciousness and perception imply both a source and an object, it follows from hence, that this mental vacuity is the great field of action in which the understanding operates, and by forming intermediate ideas, proceeds, step by step, until it has connected together apparently distant objects, and without the aids of which we could not perceive the connexion. As, then, the activity of the mind implies both a source and an object in all its operations, it is a sufficient demonstration that consciousness and perception do exist, and from this existence an active principle must follow also; without which, nothing but absolute *inertness* could exist.

But while these primary actions of the soul are necessarily admitted to exist, we feel in our minds, a judgment forming itself upon discernment, and *electing* or *discarding* objects which are presented

to our view, in proportion as the real or fancied excellencies of these objects are supported by evidence.

I said, forming itself upon our *discernment;* for in the nature of things, it is evident that discernment must have existed previous to our judgments; for unless we admit this previous existence of discernment, we must suppose the judgment to decide upon what *(to us)* can have no existence. In addition to this, we feel certain preponderations of mind, by which we either adopt or reject such things as present themselves to our view. These adoptions or rejections, may be termed *volitions*, or the actions of the mind. That every volition is but *an action*, will appear when we consider, that volition can have no independent existence: whatever has a positive existence must be independent, and what is independent must be invariably the same. Without this uniformity, its existence cannot be ascertained; and to speak of *positive existence*, which at times may BE, and at other times may cease to BE, is a contradiction. For could we conceive any thing which has a *positive existence*, which can dispense with its Being for any given time, and yet retain its name; by the same mode of reasoning it might dispense with its Being entirely, and we must give in this case, a positive existence to a nonentity.

That volition does not invariably exist, is evident, not only from the irregularity of its existence, but from its passing from one object to another. And if it be admitted, that it is capable of exerting itself in different directions; I would ask—What is become of its existence in that *moment* of duration in which it passes from one object to another?—Between its forsaking one exertion, and putting forth another, in the next link of successive action? Here it is certain it can have no existence. Or if it have, it must be a volition without any volition, which is a contradiction in terms.

As volition must in this interim necessarily cease to exist; it follows from hence, that its existence cannot be *positive;* and if not positive, it can only exist in relation to some principle from which it results. *Nothing* can produce no action. *Mere nothing* can have no accidents. And as nothing, must ever result from nothing, volition itself demonstrates the positive existence of some primary substance. As, therefore, volition is what every man feels,—as it can have no positive existence of itself,—and it can never result from nothing, the positive existence of some *primary* substance* necessarily follows.

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* Whatever the *real internal nature* of *substance* may be in itself, it is very certain, that our abstract idea of it is very confused and incomplete. But it is equally certain, that the confusedness and incompleteness of our ideas, can in no case affect the certainty of its existence The existence of all material substances, become certain, from the knowledge which we have of those primary qualities which cannot exist of themselves, whether they be separately or collectively considered. When we perceive *magnitude*, *ponderosity*, and *figure*, in any given portion of matter, we well know, that *magnitude*, *ponderosity*, and *figure*, cannot exist of themselves; but we are naturally led to conceive the existence of *something* in which these qualities do exist, and from whence we derive our ideas of them. Thus for instance—the ideas of *magnitude*, *ponderosity*, *figure*, and *solidity*, are all necessary to our idea of IRON; but neither *magnitude*, *ponderosity*, *figure*, nor *solidity*, whether taken separately or collectively, can give to us the idea of IRON; and yet so closely interwoven in the very nature of iron, are these qualities, that if we substract *all*, or *either* of them from the *nature* or *idea* of *iron*, both the *idea* and *nature* of *iron* must necessarily perish also. It is from hence we learn,—that the *substance* of iron, must be a *something* distinct from all these qualities, though totally inse-

But although I have hitherto spoken of the *understanding*, the *perception*, and the *judgment*, I would not wish to insinuate, that these properties can have any existence independent of one another. They are only the modifications of the actions of that common principle in which they inhere; and as none of these qualities can have but a relative existence, they plainly carry the mind up to that source from whence they flow:—A *source* which must be immaterial, or else we must suppose matter to have communicated to these qualities, a *nature* which it does not possess, and consequently a nature that it could not bestow.

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parable from them. This *secret something*, in which these qualities exist, is, therefore, *that* to which the term substance is justly applied in all material bodies.

When from a substance which is *material*, we turn to one which is *immaterial*; the same modes of reasoning will carry us up to the *certainty* of its existence although we can form no idea whatever of the internal constitution of its nature. For neither *consciousness*, *perception*, nor *judgment*, include within themselves the ideas of *self-subsistence*; nor can these qualities, whether taken individually or collectively, include *within themselves* the nature or idea of an *immaterial substance*. The *substance* in which these qualities exist, must be *a something* distinct from the qualities themselves, but totally inseparable from them;—a *something* which has hitherto eluded all human penetration, and baffled the researches of philosophy, both in material and immaterial natures.

SECT. V.

Thinking not essential to Matter.

THE positive existence of some source being thus far explored, the great question now presents itself to our view. Is this common principle or substance from whence these qualities flow—*material* or *immaterial?* Can *consciousness*, *perception*, &c. be essential to, or result from matter? Are these qualities material in themselves? If they be, does not the supposition include within it several contradictions? If not material, can *matter produce qualities* which have no relation to itself?

If this *substance*, from whence these qualities flow, be *material*, it then follows that matter itself must think. And if mere matter, considered as such, be capable of thinking, thinking must be an essential property of its nature; and if thinking be an essential property, no portion of matter can exist abstracted from it; without admitting this, its *essentiality* is done away. Now if we admit every portion of matter, whether animate or inanimate, to think, this thinking must be annexed to it, under all its mutations of infinite divisibility; and then, either this *consciousnes* must adhere to some particular part of this divided portion; or be divided with it. If the former, then those portions of matter, which are detached from that part to which his consciousness adheres, must exist where no consciousness can possibly be; and this demonstrates—that consciousness is not essential to its nature. But, if we suppose consciousness to be divided with the divisions of matter, it can then exist in no *part* of this divided portion. For to suppose a *divided consciousness* to exist by inherence, in several portions of divided matter, is to suppose it *to* exist, and *not* to exist, at the same time. As the idea of a divided consciousness includes a con-

tradiction; it necessarily follows—that in either case, consciousness cannot be essential to any material substance.

It has been already proved,—that *matter* is an extended substance; and if it be capable of thinking, consciousness must be either as *extensive* as its dimensions, or confined to some particular part. If the former, let us suppose any given portion of this extended substance *to exist, throughout* which we will admit consciousness to be diffused. In this case, if the *volitions* of this diffused consciousness, were to be at once directed to the central point of this extended substance, consciousness, must operate in opposite directions, which opposition in its directions will at once prove the *diversity* of its nature, and consequently destroy the *identity* of its existence. For if a simple action of the mind, can arise from principle which is necessarily extended and diffused; this action must derive its being, from an energy which cannot equally contribute to its existence. But if it be the latter, then it follows, that matter is different from itself, because one part is supposed to be capable of thinking, and the other parts not; which ends in this contradiction—that matter thinks, and does not think at the same time.

The *former*, supposes an action of the mind to arise from a cause which can give it no existence; and the *latter*,—that matter is capable of thinking, and incapable at the same time: the rational result therefore is,—that matter cannot think.

Nor can we suppose, that the *refinement* or *subtilty* of any substance, can give to itself a quality which it does not naturally possess. Matter under every modification, is but matter still. No matter, therefore, can be refined beyond the boundaries of its nature; it is a contradiction to suppose it. If, therefore, the soul be material, it must be formed of parts:—must be an *extended* substance, and *capable* of divisibility: and from hence it follows,

that there can be no distinction between soul and body, except in modification; and what is divided by nothing but modification, must leave the natures physically alike. And if those *essential properties* which are applicable to the body, be alike applicable to the soul, all distinctions vanish in an instant, and the distinct identity of the soul is at once done away.

If thinking be essential to the nature of matter, thinking can assume no variety of modes. The essential properties of a material substance must be as permanent in their natures as the substance itself, with which its *essential* properties must be coessential; for certain it is, that nothing which includes mutability and diversity in its nature can be an essential property of a substance which is of itself restive and inert. The physical nature of all substances must be permanent and fixed, in order to the establishment of their Being and the preservation of their identity; and to make *that* which includes *mutability* and *variableness*, an essential property of a substance, to the very identity and existence of which permanency must be admitted to be absolutely necessary, we make *that* which is *mutable* and *variable* to be an essential property of that which is *uniform* and *immutable*. If, therefore thinking be an essential property of matter, either activity and variableness, must be excluded from its nature or with its activity and variableness, thinking must be an essential property of a substance from the permanency and stability of whose nature, activity and variableness must be excluded:—in the former case we must destroy every idea which we have of thinking, in order that we may establish its source, which is proving the existence of a substance, by the annihilation of what is supposed to be an essential property of its nature; and in the latter, in order to preserve its nature we make thinking itself (from the activity of its nature)

to destroy the permanency of that substance from whence we attempt to derive its existence. I therefore conclude, that thinking cannot be an *essential* property of any material substance.

To affirm the soul to be material, and yet to deny it those properties by which alone matter can be known; supposes it to be matter and not matter at the same time: but, if the soul have those properties which are inseparable from material substances, (which must be admitted if it be material) it then follows, that consciousness must be either extended through the whole soul, or it must not. If it be, then no *part* of the soul can possess consciousness; and what is not virtually included in every *part*, cannot possibly arise from a *whole* which is formed of those parts; if not—then the whole soul is not necessary to its own existence; and in either case the mind is conducted to a contradiction.

If matter be capable of thinking, and thinking be essential to its nature, (which is presumed under the present consideration) thinking must have been coeval with its existence, or it must not. If coeval, there could then have been no previous existence of a capacity in matter for thinking; and if there were no previous capacity in matter, we must suppose it *capable* of thinking without any *capacity*, or without being *capable*; which is a contradiction. But if we suppose in matter a *previous* capacity, thinking cannot be *coeval* with its existence. It then follows, that matter can, and actually *did*, exist abstracted from, and previous to, thinking;—that thinking is not necessary to its existence, and consequently—that thinking is not an essential property of matter. And whether we conceive thinking to be coeval with matter or not, the evidence is sufficiently clear to produce conviction,—that mere matter, considered as such, cannot think.

If thinking be essential to matter, then matter must not only think always, but think always in the same direction. To suppose otherwise, is to suppose that matter is capable of producing *effects*, which are contrary to its own *effects*; or that the necessary effects of matter, are contrary to the necessary effects of matter, which is a contradiction. And to suppose the soul to think always in the same direction is to contradict what every man feels. To admit its uniformity, is to admit that to *be* which we know is *not*; and to admit the reverse, is a contradiction. And the certain conclusion from each side is—that matter cannot think. And should any one wish for another proof of this point, I think it may be found in this:—The human mind is conscious of the existence of matter, but it is self evident, that matter must have existed prior to a consciousness of its own existence; and from hence it undeniably follows that consciousness cannot be essential to matter—and consequently that matter, merely considered as such, cannot think.*

* It may perhaps be objected to the force of this argument, that the same reasonings which I have employed to exclude consciousness from being an essential property of matter, will apply with equal force against its being essential to an immaterial substance. I wish it to be understood that in this place I am not speaking of any modification of matter, but of matter in its most simple state; and am contending that active consciousness cannot be an essential property of its nature. If the activity of consciousness be an essential property of matter, a consciousness of matter must have been coeval with the existence of matter itself, which supposition is refuted by the nature of *existence* itself. To admit in matter a capacity of consciousness which is called into action after its existence, is to make the activity of this consciousness not to be an essential property of, but to result from matter, which is not the case now under consideration, but which will

SECT. VI.

Consciousness cannot be the Result of Matter.

As consciousness, for reasons which I have already assigned, cannot be an *essential* property, so neither, for the reasons following, can it be the *result* of matter. The only possible ways in which consciousness can result from matter, must be from matter as a *substance*, or from some peculiar *modification* which it assumes. The influence of matter can extend no farther than the contact of its surfaces; and under every form which it is capable of assuming, *matter* can be but *matter* still. If the *mutual contact* of material bodies be entirely annihilated, in that instant it is certain, that all influence must cease to exist. For could we suppose the influence of matter, to extend beyond the physical contact of material bodies, we must suppose it then to *be* where it is *not;* and to operate and produce effects, beyond those confines of nature which limits its existence.

If a ball shot from the mouth of a cannon, were to move onward with all its velocity to some destined object, it could produce no effect, but in proportion as its surfaces were brought into contact with the surfaces of other bodies: and though in the progress of its motion it might rouse from a state of mere passiveness, other portions of matter, and communicate to them a motion from its own impulse; yet it must be evident, that these portions of matter thus put in motion, could produce no effect, but by bringing their surfaces into contact also with those of other bodies on which the effect was to be produced. Such, therefore, is the uniform manner

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be the subject of the next section, in which it will be considered whether or not consciousness can result from matter.

in which all material bodies influence one another, and without which no effect whatever can be produced. And to suppose matter to produce effects where it is *not*, is to suppose it to extend itself beyond its own existence ;—to act, where from its absence it can have no power of acting,—and that it is *present*, and yet *absent* at the same time. As matter, therefore, cannot possibly extend itself beyond its own existence, nor ever act where it is not, it necessarily follows, that consciousness cannot result from any material substance.

If consciousness result from matter, it must depend upon matter for its existence ; and if it thus be dependant, consciousness cannot possibly exist where matter is not. And if matter be not infinite in its extension, (and that it is not I hope soon to make appear) there must be in the immensity of space, pure expansion where no matter is. In this case I would ask,—Is the mind of man capable of extending its actions through this pure distance, which is thus supposed to be devoid of matter, or not ? If it be, we have then a clear idea of consciousness acting where no matter is ; and if it can exist and act where matter is not, it undeniably follows, that it neither results from matter, nor can be dependant on it for its existence. But, if consciousness cannot extend its actions in this pure expansion, it must be because something hinders ; but this is contrary to the supposition in the case given. For as every thing capable of obstructing its operations, is supposed to be removed, it must follow, that the mind must be at full liberty to perform its operations, or we must be driven to this conclusion, that *something* must obstruct when every thing capable of obstructing is supposed to be removed.

If consciousness *result* from matter, it must exist *virtually* in the cause, as it does *formally* in the effect ; for if this be not admitted, we must suppose matter to be *capable* of producing effects which it

has no *power* to bring to pass, or that it does what it is incapable of doing, which is a contradiction. But if consciousness exist virtually in the cause, as it does formally in the effect, the divisibility of matter must be done away. For if we annex the idea of divisibility, to any portion of matter in which a principle of consciousness is supposed virtually to reside, it will be impossible to detach the idea of divisibility from this inherent conscious power. And to admit the possibility of an effect to arise from a power which is necessarily divided with that substance on which it depended for existence, is to admit the certainty of an effect to arise from a cause which must be necessarily annihilated. But if the producing power be annihilated by divisibility, (which must be admitted) it necessarily follows that no effect can possibly be produced by a power which is not; and consequently, that consciousness cannot result from matter as its cause.

As, then, a potential or virtual energy must necessarily inhere in matter, in order to the production of mental action, as its result; (which must be if consciousness result from matter) and as all matter is capable of infinite divisibility, it necessarily follows, that no such energy can reside within it; and consequently that no such action can result from it; and therefore, matter considered merely as such, can have no such energy resident within it to produce, and can have no such action as its result.

That matter is not infinite in its extension, is evident from its motion, and its capability of division. If matter were infinite in its extension, there could be no portion of space where matter is not. And if infinite space be full of matter, there can be no vacuum in which it can possibly move: all matter must necessarily be in a quiescent state, nor could it be possible that any portion of matter could take possession of that space, which must be pre-occupied

by another. No foreign impulse could remove it, because there can be no room for such impulse to act; nor if there were such a power, could it remove a single atom. Every atom must be supported in its station by the contiguity of surrounding atoms; and if we were to conceive it possible, that any atom could possibly be moved, it must enter into that portion of space which another atom occupied at the same time. If the space which any single atom occupies, could admit another atom without removing the former, it would follow, that this portion of space could not be filled with this pre-occupying atom; which at once destroys the infinitude of matter; and to suppose that the space which any atom occupied were entirely full with this pre-occupying atom, and yet that it could admit another within the bounds of its superfices, is to include this contradiction,—that space is full, and yet not full of matter at the same time. Matter, therefore, is not infinite.

If, then, space can, and necessarily must, exist where matter is not, and if consciousness can extend itself through this pure distance, it follows, with all the decisiveness that reason can require—that consciousness can no more result from matter, than it can be an essential property of its nature.

SECT VII.

Thinking cannot result from any Modification of Matter.

As consciousness cannot be an *essential* property of matter, nor *result* from it, (merely considered as such) for reasons which have been already offered, the next question which offers itself to the mind, is—Whether consciousness can result from any *peculiar modification* of its parts, or combination of those particles of which any being is composed.

To consider the human soul as distinct from the body, while both are supposed to be material, is a mere fallacy ;—matter, under every form, can be but matter still ; and whether it be denominated *body*, or *soul*, its real essence can be by no means altered by this distinction. If it be matter, it must, in all its states, have all its properties ; and by all the modifications which it is capable of undergoing, it can acquire nothing new. A being which is physically incapable of thinking in *any* state, must (if it be the same) be necessarily incapable in *every* state. For if no new powers be added to any being, its modification can only affect the arrangement of its component parts, while the physical state of its nature must remain entirely the same.

To suppose that the *mere modification* of any *body*, will enable that *body* purely from this modification, to be capable of producing effects, with which all the parts of the body modified have no relation, is to suppose that it receives an additional power, which nothing but modification can communicate ; while modification itself can have no existence but what it derives from the parts which are modified, and which of themselves can possess no such power, which is a palpable contradiction.

All bodies, under every modification, must be formed of parts, and though united together, they are still the same ; and if a power to produce consciousness, under any modification, do exist in any body, it must result from the particular arrangement of its component parts.

Every *whole* must be formed of those parts which are necessary to its existence : and to conceive, that consciousness can result from any modification of these parts, is to conceive, that the whole possesses a power that *all* and *every* part of which it is composed are totally destitute.—That the whole, which is formed only of certain parts, is capable of communicating what it neither possesses, nor has re-

ceived; or in other language, that it is capable of producing consciousness, and yet incapable at the same time.

An assemblage of atoms may produce an increase of magnitude. A modification of parts may produce a change of figure A new disposition of surfaces may produce different sensations, and variously affect the organs of vision; but all changes which matter is capable of undergoing, are only capable of *enlarging* or *lessening* the extent of those essential properties of its nature, which always exist in proportion to the specific quantity of matter which is thus modified. If all consciousness result from any modification of matter, it is certain, that consciousness could not have existed previously to the existence of that modification from which it results; and if so, no consciousness could have existed prior to the existence of matter. The arrangement of materials must necessarily be posterior, in point of time, to the existence of those materials which are thus arranged; and if we admit the pre-existence of those parts which are thus modified, and consciousness itself to be the result of a *modification* which depends upon those *parts* for its own existence; we behold, not only the pre-existence of *matter*, but the pre-existence even of that *modification* from which consciousness itself must be supposed to result. And yet, to make consciousness result from any modification of matter, we must deny the existence of all consciousness, previously to that which results from a modification, which must be the effect of consciousness itself.*

* I have frequently been inclined to think, that the doctrine which makes consciousness to result from matter, or any modification of it, approaches nearer to *atheism* than it's advocates are aware. If *matter*, under any modification, be capable of thinking, we shall, per-

If, then, consciousness be the result of the modification of matter, this *modification* must have been made without any consciousness. But to suppose *consciousness* to result from any thing which is of itself *unconscious*, is to suppose that what *is*, could be begotten by that which *is not*,—that *nothing* itself is capable of acting, although we admit that it has no existence.

If consciousness result from any given modification of matter, the stability of that peculiar modi-

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haps, never be able to know by any modes of reasoning which are placed within our reach,—whether God himself be not a material Being? And whatsoever opens the door to the *materiality* of God, commences an attack on his *immensity* and *infinity*. For certain it is, that whatsoever results from any modification of matter, supposes the previous existence of the thing modified. If, therefore, the Divine consciousness result from any modification of matter, there must have been a period when the Divine consciousness was *not*; and consequently God can be neither *eternal* nor *infinite*. Such is the inevitable result of the supposition—that the Divine consciousness can result from any *modification* of matter.

But if we admit the supposition—that God is a *material Being*, abstracted from all ideas of the *manner* or *modification* of his Being; we then make consciousness to be an essential property of matter, and banish at one stroke all spiritual substances from existence. Without entering into any detail of argument in this note, I assume it as a self-evident proposition—*that matter cannot be infinite in its extension, but that some boundaries must limit its existence* If, therefore, God be a material Being, his *immensity* must be given up, because that which is limited by *any* boundaries, can never include the idea of *immensity* within its dimensions. But as *eternity*, *infinity*, and *immensity*, are inseparable from God, it clearly follows, that God cannot be a material Being; and I consider this as no contemptible argument, to prove that matter cannot think.

fication is necessary to the existence of that consciousness, which can only result therefrom. To suppose the contrary, destroys the supposition; and to admit the supposition, is as repugnant to every principle of philosophy, as it is false in fact.

The human body is continually in a state of instability and mutation. Effluvia are continually exhaling by degrees which are imperceptible, those particles which were previously in union with one another. Nutrition is constantly invigorating with new supplies, those successive wants which unavoidably arise from this impermanent state of things. The rage of disorders,—the accidents to which we are exposed,—the very atmosphere which we respire, all conspire to tell us that—*stability is not for man.* Nor is it probable that those particles of which the body of an infant is formed, when he enters this world, are carried with him in hoary age to the silent grave. The continual diminution of old particles, and the constant accession of new, in the human system, are so evident to our senses, that the subject precludes the necessity of further proof.

That modification is nothing but an *arrangement of parts,* is a position, which I believe, no one will dispute. And to suppose consciousness to result from a *mere arrangement,* is to suppose that those parts which are thus arranged, have communicated to the arrangement of themselves, a potential quality which they did not possess—and that they have communicated what they could not communicate.

As the *modification* of all material substances can have no positive, but only a relative existence, and can exist no further than as it depends upon matter, so it can of itself have no effects. Nothing can result from a *mere relation.* For if a mere relation can produce consciousness, this relation must be its cause; and to suppose any thing to be a cause,

which of itself has no positive existence, is to suppose it to act without a being—and that it begets what it has no power of begetting.

Whether consciousness result from matter, or from any modification of it, it must still depend upon matter for its existence; and, in admitting consciousness to result from any given modification of it, we must admit that matter, under that given modification, is capable of producing effects, with which, in its abstracted state, it could have no connexion. The whole, in this case, must be supposed to possess what is not physically included in all its parts; which is as contradictory as it is absurd.

Consciousness, resulting from the modification of matter, must still look up to matter as it's remoter cause; and whether we suppose consciousness to be the remote, or the immediate result of matter, it must either be a necessary effect, or an accident of it. To suppose it to be a necessary effect, is to make a quality to result from matter with which it (matter) can have no relation; and to suppose consciousness to be an accident of it, is to destroy the *necessity* of any peculiar modification of matter, in order to its existence.

Thus, then, consider consciousness in what relation soever we may to matter, it ends either in an absurdity or a contradiction; and in no case which can be given, can any such relation be made out, as i necessary to establish that connexion between consciousness and matter, which must ever subsist between an effect and its cause. And if this relation (without which no such connexion can be established) be done away; the undeniable consequence is, that consciousness cannot result from matter, nor from any modification which it may assume.

The order of nature can receive no outrage without revolting at the violence of the attempt. Nature will not warp to serve the private systems of

men, nor accommodate herself to those modes of thinking which are adopted without consulting her dictates. The grand chain of things lies straight before us; and though the human mind may be influenced by prejudice, or rendered tenacious through ambition, no inroads can be made. A deviation from the voice of nature may be rendered plausible for a season; till divested of those mists in which error conceals herself, she unveils the contradictions which await those, who, borne on the wings of presumption, dart into those regions where nature never travels, and on which account she refuses to become their guide.

SECT. VIII.

Consciousness is not a Quality superadded to Matter.

BUT while I assert—that thinking cannot be an essential property of matter, nor result from any modification of it, it may be said that—Consciousness may be a superadded quality. That a *mere quality, considered as such*, cannot possibly have an abstract existence, I feel no hesitation in asserting. Whatever is a quality, must be a quality of some substance; the mind is necessarily obliged to associate together the two ideas.

To suppose any thing to be a quality, without admitting the existence of some substance of which it is a quality, is a contradiction.—It supposes it to be a quality and not a quality at the same time. If consciousness be a quality superadded to matter, which is the case now supposed, I would ask—What is consciousness a quality of? it must be of matter, or it must not. If it be a quality of matter, matter must be its cause, and if so, it ceases to be *superadded*; if not, its existence is thus ascertained distinct from matter, and the mind, in order to

find its substance, is led to explore another source. If consciousness be a quality *superadded* to matter, both consciousness and matter must have existed antecedent to their union with each other. Matter must have existed previously to this accession of quality, for a quality could not be added to that which did not exist. Consciousness must have existed also, or it could not have been *communicated* to matter. Existence must always be previous to any modification of it. And if both matter and consciousness exist prior to their union with each other, it then follows that this new accession of quality in matter, (the previous existence of which must be admitted) does not depend for its existence upon its union with matter. And if this dependance be taken away, it must also follow, that consciousness may as well exist after its separation from matter, as it did previously to its union with it.—Either this quality must have *existed* prior to its union with matter, or it must not. If it did, it cannot be a quality of matter; if not, it cannot be superadded.

Should it be said, that—"though the pre-existence of a conscious quality be admitted, it may, "nevertheless, be incapable of action, until this "union takes place; and that all its actions are "the result of this union;" to this also I answer,—that the supposition includes several contradictions.

To suppose a conscious quality to exist without a conscious capacity, is to suppose it to be and not to be at the same time. It also supposes the quality to be conscious, and yet it makes all its consciousness to depend upon its union with matter. So that a conscious quality is supposed not to be conscious; and its consciousness is supposed to result from a union of this quality with an unconscious substance. If this *consciousness* must *result* from such an *union*, it must follow that this conscious quality must be an unconscious one previous to this union, and

that the idea of a superadded conscious quality is an absolute *nonentity*.* If the superadded quality be *conscious* in itself, there can be no necessity for its union with a substance which is *unconscious*; if not, consciousness can never result from such an union.

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* When Mr. Locke says (vol. ii. p. 140) "We have "the ideas of *matter* and *thinking*, but possibly shall "never be able to know, whether any *mere material being* thinks or no," I am rather at a loss to discover his meaning.

If Mr. Locke means—that finite comprehension cannot fathom the modes in which infinite wisdom can operate, and that we know not what latent properties God may unfold to produce the phenomenon; I most heartily assent to his proposition. But this is bidding adieu to our circle of comprehension, and means of knowledge; and is in effect saying no more than this—"*that what is to us unknown, is unknown to us.*" But if Mr. Locke intend, by that proposition to intimate,—that in the present state of things, and under the *present modes of human knowledge*, operating upon the known qualities of matter, no certainty of reasoning can be obtained to prove that matter cannot think; I feel some hesitation (from reasons which I have already advanced in the preceding sections) in giving it my assent. It is with the profoundest diffidence that I presume to depart from such a genius as Mr. Locke; but if an implicit confidence be placed in any man, an embargo is laid on free investigation, and unbiassed inquiry can be no more.

CHAP. II.

OF SPIRIT.

SECT. I.

No created Being can fully comprehend itself—A conscious Principle is essentially immaterial—No divisible being is capable of consciousness—Consciousness is not an adventitious acquisition—Matter cannot abstract.

HAVING in the foregoing pages been advancing reasons to prove that matter cannot think, thinking cannot be either an essential property of it, or belonging to its modes and accidents, and that it cannot result from any combination of particles or modification of matter; I now proceed to investigate those mental qualities which we feel within ourselves, and without which the station which we fill in the vast chain of existence is done away.

Whatever real qualities we possess, whether they be corporeal or mental, they are equally necessary to our present state of being. And if any power or quality necessary to our present state of being, be annihilated, the present mechanism of man is entirely destroyed, and a new æra is formed in the present state of things.

How any created being can fully comprehend itself, is to me a problem which I cannot solve. A full comprehension, implies an expansion of faculty, which takes a circuit round itself, and travels on those margins of existence where entity both begins and ends. A mind, therefore, which can fully comprehend itself, must be expanded beyond itself, and exercise its actions where it has no

being. It must act where it is not, and exist in its *comprehension*, where in its *real being*, it has no existence. Whether such a being can possibly exist, which *is* and *is not* at the same time, every man is at liberty to decide.

If the human faculty cannot expand itself beyond its own being, that reason, which God has planted within the human soul, brands with presumption and folly, the arrogance of those, who dare to reject certain truths, of the existence of which we may be fully assured, merely because they are beyond the reach of human comprehension.

We know not the physical nature of any substance; but the assurance of existence, and a knowledge of the physical nature of that existence, are distinct ideas, which bear to one another but little or no relation. It is not the physical essence of things we inquire after, but a certainty of their existence, and of that connexion which subsists between substances and qualities, and the relation which they bear to one another.

I have already endeavored to prove that matter cannot think. I now proceed to prove that the human soul cannot be material. Indeed the inevitable result of what I have already advanced fully tends to establish this point. For if the soul be admitted to have any existence—if there be but two substances in which all things inhere—*matter* and *spirit*; and if the soul be not material,—there must be an immaterial principle in Man.

Whatever has any existence, must be material, or it must not. And that which has any existence, and is not material, must be immaterial; there can be no medium between these two extremes. If, then there be, in the human mind *consciousness*, *perception*, and *understanding*, there must be some primary principle which is *conscious*, which *perceives* and which *understands*. And whatever the physical nature of these qualities is, such must

be the physical nature of that primary principle also, to the existence of which these qualities are essential.

If any *substance* can be of a nature distinct from the nature of those *qualities* which are essential to its existence, this substance must be different from itself. And if the qualities which are supposed essential to the nature of this substance, be different in nature from that substance, to the being of which they are supposed to be essential ; their essentiality is done away, and the relation between them can be no more.

The same reasonings will hold good through the modes and accidents of substances ;—Nature is invariably inseparable from herself. If man be supposed to possess any knowledge, he must have a capacity suited thereto ; and in their physical natures, there must be a congruity between them. To suppose otherwise, is to suppose, that man has knowledge without any capacity for it ; which is a contradiction. If, then, we have knowledge, and this knowledge, and the capacity thereof, be of the same physical nature, it necessarily follows, that either knowledge itself must be *material*, or that both knowledge and capacity must be destitute of *corporeity*. That nothing is able to extend itself beyond its own being, will, I believe, be readily admitted ; and that knowledge is able to operate beyond the limits of corporeal being, will not, I believe be denied. If, then, knowledge can go beyond the compages of body, and if nothing can extend beyond itself, it undeniably follows, that knowledge is not from matter —and that there must be an immaterial principle in man. Knowledge implies a capacity, and this capacity implies a substance in which it must inhere ; and which, for reasons already assigned, must be of the same physical nature with itself. And from hence the conclusion follows, that there must be an immaterial substance in man.

To form an idea of any substance which is not material, abstracted from consciousness and perception, is absolutely impossible. For if we detach from any material substance, the ideas of magnitude, solidity, and figure ; and from any substance which is not material, the qualities of perception, and consciousness, we can form no conception of either ; for when the only properties are destroyed, from whence these distinct natures are denominated ; there remains nothing to which we can attach any idea ; and the mind is left in possession of a mere *nonentity* But while every man feels within himself, that *perception* which it is impossible to divest the mind of ; and while we can by no means annex the idea of corporeity to such consciousness : and, while it is certain that a sameness of nature must subsist between this consciousness and that substance from whence it flows, the mind is carried to the same conclusion—that there must be an immaterial principle in man.

In addition to this perception which every man feels, we find other powers similar in their natures, but operating in different directions. The understanding, the judgment, the will, have each their relative existence ; and all unitedly declare the necessity of some substance in which they must inhere. And to suppose, that pure perception can exist abstracted from any relation to some common substance ; is not only to give to this perception a distinct and independent existence, but it is to abstract all the powers of the soul from one another ; and if so, the understanding must exist independent of the judgment, the judgment independent of the will, these independent of the perception, and we lose ourselves in a chaos of contradiction, or a labyrinth of absurdities.

If, then, a conscious substance cannot exist abstracted from the other subordinate powers of the soul, it necessarily follows, that these powers must

be essential to its existence ; and, if essential, the soul itself, must be the same in nature, consequently immaterial.

That these powers which we possess cannot exist independent of one another, will appear evident, if we reflect but a moment on the absurdity of the supposition.

Let us suppose for instance, the judgment to exist alone ; it then follows, that we must judge without perceiving. And to suppose that the mind can judge without perceiving, is to suppose it to decide upon a subject of which it can have no perception. If, again, we suppose perception to exist abstracted from judgment, it will end in the same absurdity ; for it supposes the mind to be certain of its own perception, while it is destitute of all judgment, whether it have any perception or not. Or, if we suppose the understanding to exist alone, we must then suppose it to be an understanding destitute of both perception and judgment ; or in other words—that it is an understanding without any understanding, which is a contradiction.

From these observations, if I am not greatly deceived, it must follow, that no one single attribute of the soul can exist alone ; and consequently that it must inhere in some substance distinct from matter, which substance must necessarily be immaterial.

If *consciousness*, *perception*, and *judgment*, necessarily suppose the existence of some substance, they cannot, by inhering in that substance, either communicate to, or acquire from, that substance, a nature totally opposite to, and distinct from, themselves. Nor can a whole, by any means possess a nature which is not possessed by those powers which are necessary to its existence. If it can, then *consciousness*, *perception*, and *judgment*, are not necessary to its existence. If it cannot, then either consciousness, perception, and judgment,

must be materially extended, or the soul must necessarily be immaterial. That consciousness, perception, &c. are materially extended, I believe no one will affirm; the reverse may be demonstrated in many ways. No two things which are material can occupy in one instant the same identity of space; and if the powers of the soul be material, they can neither exist at once in the same soul, nor operate inseparably from one another. But, that these powers do, and necessarily must, exist together, and that it is impossible they can exist abstracted from this union, has been already demonstrated; and from hence also it unquestionably follows—that the soul of man must be immaterial.

Whatever has but a relative, must exist in its manner different from that which has a positive existence. Nothing which is of itself but a *mere quality*, can, *philosophically speaking*, have modes and accidents. Nor can any thing which is but *a quality*, have any *quality* which depends upon it for its existence. To suppose any one quality to depend upon another *mere* quality (except primary qualities, which are totally unknown) for its existence, is to make the former quality to commence cause, and to make the latter dependant quality to derive from the former, a certainty of existence which the former does not possess, and which, therefore, it cannot communicate. And if consciousness, perception, &c. have no relative dependant qualities, they can be but qualities in themselves—qualities of a *substance* as incapable of *extension* as themselves, and consequently as immaterial. As consciousness, perception, &c. can be but qualities, they must bear a strict relation to that substance which they are the qualities of; and from the nature of these qualities, may be known the nature of that substance in which they inhere; and therefore it must be—both *unextended* and *immaterial*.

If the nature of substances were not denominated from their own essential properties, it would follow, that these essential properties were not *essential*, which is a contradiction. But if the substance be denominated from its essential properties, and these essential properties be known; we then have, from our knowledge of these essential properties, all that knowledge of their substance which is within the reach of possibility, supported by the unequivocal evidence of demonstration. If then, to suppose consciousness to exist, while we deny the existence of a conscious principle, be a contradiction; if to suppose consciousness to have an *abstracted, positive existence*, be equally absurd; and if to suppose consciousness to be essential to matter, or to result from any peculiar modification of it, be actually *impossible;* it necessarily follows, from the very existence of consciousness, that there must be an immaterial substance in man.

If consciousness, perception, &c. considered as abstractions of the mind, be not material, which must be admitted, I would ask—How can they, by inhering in any common substance, acquire from that substance, a nature, whose properties are totally distinct from its own? If they can, then these abstractions are not necessary to the existence of that substance, because their nature is distinct; if not, the principle itself must be immaterial. If these abstractions be not essential to the Being of that substance in which they are supposed to inhere, they may be separated; and if separated, I would again ask—What idea can we form of their *abstract existence?* And what idea can we form of that substance from which they are abstracted? To suppose this *substance* to be *matter*, is to make consciousness not to be necessary to the existence of the human soul; and to suppose it to be *spirit*, is to suppose it to be spirit while every property is abstracted, from which spirit is denominated;—that

it is spirit without *spiritual powers*—and that it is spirit, and not spirit, at the same time.

If this conscious principle which exists in man, be material, it must have all the properties which are essential to matter; to suppose otherwise is a contradiction: and whatsoever has the properties of matter, must fill empty space:—for to suppose any substance, to the existence of which extension is necessary, to have a Being, and yet to extend in no space, is a contradiction also. And whatever *fills* empty space, must have dimensions. But to attribute dimensions to a substance, whose existence can only be ascertained by those qualities which must necessarily be *immaterial*, and which qualities must be essentially necessary to the existence of this substance; is to suppose the substance to be material, while we have no conception of such a nature, and while the only qualities which denominate its existence, exclude the idea of materiality from our conceptions. And to suppose, under these circumstances, the substance to be material, is to admit the idea of materiality, while we must confess we have no such idea. If these conclusions be fair, the necessary result is, that this substance must be immaterial.

If the soul be capable of division, (which must be admitted if it be material) and yet every part be necessary to the existence of consciousness; how can those parts either acquire or lose a property by division, which they did not individually possess when in *union* with one another? Mere modification, can neither communicate nor destroy any property which is peculiar to the nature modified. If a being, under any modification, be capable of thinking, I would ask, Is this being capable of *divisibility*, or not? If not, it cannot be material; if it be, I would again ask,—If it be divided into as many distinct particles as it is capable of, is each of these particles, in this divided state, capable of thinking,

or not? If they are, then an *union* of them is not necessary to *cogitation*; but if they are incapable of thinking in this divided state, I would further ask, If two of these particles be united together, can they be capable of that exertion of power, which neither of them possessed in their separate state? If they can, then all besides are useless; if they cannot, can the acquisition of *three*, or *three thousand*, by being united together, possess a quality which is possessed by neither? If a number of particles, whether they be three, or three thousand, possess no quality of thinking in themselves; it is certain that their mere union with one another, can give the whole no quality, of which all the parts are destitute. Can a whole possess a quality, which is possessed by no part of which that whole is composed? If the parts which compose a whole, cannot, and do not, possess that quality which is supposed to reside in the whole, neither can the whole, which is formed of those parts. To suppose that a whole can possess a power, (which none of those parts possessed, of which it is composed) merely by the acquisition of those parts, will end in this glaring contradiction—that it is capable, and yet incapable of thinking at the same time.

An union, or disunion of parts, can only affect their modification; but the essential properties of all substances, are too permanent to be changed by any modification.

Nor will the case be altered, by supposing that consciousness is a mere *adventitious acquisition*. A quality which is adventitious, is precluded by the same mode of reasoning; and can no more exist in such a divisible substance, than if it were an essential property. If one atom, of which any being is composed, have not the power of thinking, neither can another of the same nature. If two atoms be unconscious, four must be equally destitute; and if we proceed onward in addition, till the mind

is lost in the immensity of numbers, the same conclusions will invariably hold good.

The modification of mere matter, whether the particles, of which any given portion is composed, be the same in nature, or diverse from one another, can never communicate to that portion, a power, which neither particle possessed. It may create a new disposition of surfaces, and alter the configuration of its internal parts; and from this change, new sensations may be excited by its sensible qualities, in the human mind. But all these are but the same numerical particles, differently perceived; and all the modifications which any quantity of matter is capable of undergoing, from an atom to a world, can never give to any material substance, a single quality, which is not to be found, either inhering in, or resulting from, the minutest particle in that supposed portion. And the result of all is —that matter, under every form with which we have yet been permitted to view it, is not only incapable, in its own nature, of thinking, but can never admit a conscious quality to *incorporate* with its identity.

Whether it be possible, or not, for any created being fully to comprehend itself, is to me a matter of considerable doubt; and these doubts I have already hinted. If it can, and the soul be nothing but mere matter, it must extend its comprehension, not only to the boundaries of its own nature, but to the remoter regions of intellectual life. There are certain abstractions, which the mind of man is continually forming, to which mere matter can never reach; for if matter can never act on any thing but by contact, those abstractions must forever elude its approach. But from that internal capacity which we feel, and from the distinct perceptions which we have of those abstractions, that are inaccessible to sensation; we have all the evidence that the na-

ture of the subject is capable of admitting, that there must be an immaterial principle in man.

SECT. II.

The Soul is intelligent—Can anticipate—Is not an Assemblage of independent Properties—Objections answered.

THAT all matter is of itself indifferent to motion or rest, is undeniable, from the instance given by Mr. *Locke*. "If God," says he, "were to place "any given portion of matter beyond the influence "of all corporeal being, where nothing could either "attract or repel it; and were to put this body in "motion, it is certain that under these circumstan-"ces it must move for ever: And if God were in "this case to deprive it of motion, it must be for "ever in a state of rest." In this case, all motion must be impressed on all material bodies by some foreign impulse. And if we suppose nothing but material substances to exist, it is impossible for any being to move, unless it be impelled thereto by this impulsion. That man is an intelligent being, has never yet, I believe, been denied. But if man be wholly material, and nothing which is material can move but by external impressions; it will follow, that man must be *intelligent*, and yet *unintelligent* at the same time. For if the mind of man act continually under the impulsions of foreign causes, (which must be admitted if it be material) every idea of intelligence is rendered useless and done away. Unless intelligence manifest itself, we can have no idea whatever of its existence. And what we know nothing of, we cannot pronounce to have a being. To attribute, therefore, to *external impulse*, every modification of mental action, and yet to suppose man to be an intelligent being, while those very actions of his mind by which alone in-

telligence can be known to exist, are attributed to another cause; is to suppose man to be an *intelligent*, and yet an *unintelligent* being at the same time.

If man be not an intelligent creature, he can have no *anticipation* of a future state. Nor can any being, which is not intelligent, associate together the ideas of past and future in his mind, and discover the relation which subsists between them. But this association of ideas we possess, and therefore man must be an intelligent creature; and as man must be an intelligent creature, his mental actions cannot be produced by external impulse. But as all matter must move from this external cause; and as external impulse is incompatible with the idea of intelligence in the same object; and as it is contradictory to suppose an object to be intelligent and yet impelled; it must follow, from the power which we have of associating ideas, that the human mind must date its origin from another source, and man must have an immaterial principle within.

Nor can the soul be considered as an *assemblage of distinct independent properties.* Such an assemblage supposes the abstract existence of each property, and this supposition necessarily destroys the uncompounded nature of the soul's essence. Whatever is formed of independent and abstract properties, must be capable of separation, and must therefore be a compounded Being. That the properties of the soul cannot exist abstracted from each other, has been already proved; and that they *exist*, every man's feelings sufficiently evince. The powers of the soul, therefore, which we feel, may be considered as its attributes, which, unable to exist independent of each other, emanate purely from the soul, as the fountain of intellectual life, and which thus diverge, as its streams, into these different directions. These attributes must be the same in nature with the soul itself; the same in

modification of existence, and the same in their relations to one another, under every circumstance in which they may be viewed. And if perception itself be immaterial and unextended, the soul itself must be immaterial and unextended also.

Whatever is thus founded in one common nature, cannot be capable of divisibility; and what is incapable of divisibility, must necessarily be immaterial in its nature.

Every power and quality which we can discover in the human mind, uniformly evince this truth—that these qualities are not material in themselves; and that any association which they may, or can possibly form, will only change the manner of their operations, while the identity of their nature must remain entire, is too evident to admit dispute. And as the various modifications which material substances are capable of undergoing, cannot separate them from those properties which are necessary to the existence of matter under every modification; in like manner, *that* substance from whence consciousness, perception, and judgment flow, can be, by no modification in their operations, changed in the identity of its nature, or acquire or lose by such modifications, any property which is, or is not, essential to its nature.

The internal real essence of substances is to us totally unknown. The infinitely wise God has rendered such knowledge incommunicable to man; either by placing this real essence too remote for human researches, or by laying an embargo on the faculties which explore. To communicate to us the real knowledge of essences, would in all probability, be to strike us from that rank which we now hold in the vast chain of being: and even while the knowledge which we now aim at were communicated to us, we should, in that advanced state of being which we now attempt in vain to explore, behold the prospect still opening to our view, and,

beyond the boundaries of that superior circle of knowledge, other real essences might give sufficient evidence of their existence, which we might attempt the comprehension of, with as little success as we now have, in attempting to find the real essences of *material* or *spiritual* substances.

The Almighty God has given to us faculties suited to our stations in existence, but has fixed certain boundaries, beyond which we cannot pass. We discover the illimitable region at a distance from us, but the moment we attempt to seize it, it eludes our grasp. What faculties may unfold themselves in another state of existence, is at present to us unknown. We see not the extent of substances, because we know not their real essences; and for the same reason we cannot say, where the intellectual powers shall cease to operate. The distance between finite and infinite, must be *infinite*. But to what an extent the human intellect may be expanded in this intellectual infinity, we must change our state of being to understand.

That we know not the internal essence of substances, I have already admitted; and that we know not by what mysterious cement this immaterial principle which I contend for is confined within the compages of the body, I am also willing to allow; but can in neither case admit this want of comprehension to an argument against fact. * The

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* It is a question which has been frequently asked by a description of men, who display more curiosity than wisdom, *In what part of the human body does the soul reside?* It appears to me to be one of those questions which admit no affirmative answer. The question itself seems founded upon the idea of materiality, which I conceive is foreign to the nature of the soul. It is enough for us to know, that the residence of the soul can be traced within a sphere so contracted as man. Whatever can be so far localized as to enable

phenomena of both the visible and intellectual world stand on the evidence of their own existence; and the only reason why things are as they are, is because the Almighty Creator has been so pleased. The different parts of the visible creation adhere together by secret, yet indissoluble ties.—They are destined to fill up those distinct stations which are allotted them by the appointment of Heaven, till the periods of their allotment are accomplished, when they shall occupy new stations, in ways and manners, which are at present to us unknown.

The difficulties which are to be met with in the modifications of existence, are, however, no arguments against existence itself. The mind, in investigating a subject which is so abstruse, may be oppressed with difficulties, which to us may be incapable of solution; and in cases like these, it is undoubtedly our highest wisdom to close with that side where fewest difficulties are. If an inability to comprehend, were admitted as an argument against fact, almost every truth must be rejected. And those who affect to doubt the existence of an immaterial principle in man, merely because they cannot comprehend the manner of its existence; and plead the want of comprehension as a justification of their unbelief,—would do well to be consistent with themselves.

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us to identify the exact limits of its existence, must include within it the idea of *extension*, and so far occupy this given quantity of space, as to preclude every thing besides from inheriting the limits which it engrosses. Whatever, therefore, can have its residence so far identified, cannot, in the nature of things, be immaterial. I therefore conclude, that no such particular point of space as the question supposes, can exist in the manner which is required; and consequently, that no such distinct apartment can possibly be assigned. An answer to all such enquiries must, therefore, be precluded by the very nature of the soul's existence.

Against the certainty of an immaterial principle in man, it has, indeed, been urged as follows, and that with much energy of language,—"That if God "can communicate to matter, under any modifi- "cation of being, a quality of thinking, all ration- "al proof of an immaterial substance must be done "away; and if he cannot, it argues in him a want "of power, and in this case he ceases to be om- "nipotent."

To an objection similar to this, it has been already observed, that in supposing a quality of thinking to be added to matter, the *pre-existence* of matter must be admitted. And if this quality be added, not only the substance to which it is added, but the quality itself must have had an existence also, previous to this union which is now supposed. And if both *substance* and *quality* must have existed previous to their union, the quality itself must ever be extraneous to that matter to which it is united; and what must thus be extraneous to matter, can never derive from inhesion, either a real or nominal existence.

If thinking be supposed to be a quality which is thus added to matter, it is self-evident, that this quality must have existed previous to its being added to matter;—for that quality can never be added which has no kind of existence. But if this conscious quality exist prior to its being added to matter, and matter itself also exist previous to its receiving this quality; from whence arises the necessity of this union? If this conscious quality, and that substance to which it is added, have a sufficiency of being to furnish us with two abstract independent ideas; the existence of an immaterial quality is admitted by that very objection which is raised against it.

It may, indeed, be said, that "what is added "is but a mere *quality*." I would then ask, if it be but a mere quality, how could it exist pre-

vious to its union with matter? A mere quality, considered as such, can have no positive existence; there must be something which it is the quality of. I again ask, is this quality a quality of matter or not? If it be of matter, it could not have existed previous to its being added to it—if not, the immaterial substance must be admitted which I contend for, and in either case this part of the objection is done away.

What is further said in the objection—That if God cannot make this addition to matter, it argues in him a want of power, and militates against his Omnipotence; I humbly conceive to be a gross mistake. God's power and wisdom always go hand in hand. To add, therefore, to a material substance, a quality, (which has been already proved to exist previous to its union with this substance) and to make this quality depend for its existence on its union with matter, argues not power, but militates against wisdom. To suppose that God should add a *thinking quality*, to an *unconscious, unthinking, material substance*, when both *quality* and *substance* are admitted to be in existence previous to their union; and to make this thinking quality to depend for its existence upon this substance, with which it can have no physical connection; and while it is admitted to exist prior to its union with this substance on which it is made to depend for its existence; instead of displaying God's omnipotency, is an arraignment of infinite wisdom. If the quality of thinking exist previous to its union with matter, how can it depend upon matter, or any modification of it, for its existence? If not, how can this quality be added to a material substance? In supposing it not to depend upon matter for its existence, we destroy the only reason for which it is supposed to be added; and in supposing it to depend, we make the quality to be *dependant* for its being, even while we admit its *previous existence*.

Thus is this quality made to be dependant, and yet not dependant—to derive its existence from matter, although it is admitted to have existed previous to that dependance; which is as gross a contradiction as can enter the mind of man:—And yet it is supposed to militate against Omnipotence, because God cannot do what is not within the reach of possibility to be done!

No power, whether finite or infinite, can do what is *absolutely* impossible to be done. The instant any thing is placed within the reach of accomplishment, that instant it ceases to be an impossiblity. But to suppose a quality of thinking to be added to a material substance, and yet to suppose this quality to have had no existence, even while it was thus acted upon, is a contradiction;—it supposes an action upon a subject which is supposed to have no existence. And to suppose this quality to date its origin from matter, and yet to suppose that it existed previous to its contiguity with matter, is a contradiction also, and therefore an absolute impossibility. And to suppose that omnipotency consists in the accomplishment of what cannot be accomplished, is to make Omnipotence to consist in doing what it cannot do.

However conclusive these arguments may appear, to an unprejudiced inquirer after truth, there have not been wanting men of splendid talents, and profound erudition, who have, under the auspices of philosophy, presumed to call the immateriality of the soul into question. Perhaps the impossibility of conceiving how any thing can exist which is not extended, and which has no relation to space, may have been the principal inducement with these gentlemen, to suppose that refined organized matter might produce those powers, which every man is conscious that he possesses. I am ready to admit, that could matter be so far refined, that its extension and divisibility could be purged away, it would

be refined to some purpose. But then it must be remembered, that when these properties are purged away, it is no longer matter; but, divested of those properties which are necessary to the existence of all material substances, and still retaining the certainty of existence; it must be raised into that immaterial substance, from which alone consciousness and perception can flow.

But this cannot possibly be. All matter, however refined or organized, is but matter still. And all matter must be extended, in an exact ratio to its solid contents. Nor can any refinement divest it of any one property which is essential to its nature. The moment in which it is supposed to be thus divested, that moment it ceases to exist; and what ceases to exist, must not only necessarily cease to act, but must be incapable either of consciousness or sensation.

The soul of man must either be material, or it must not. If it be, it must be capable of divisibility; and if it be divided, I would ask,—Does consciousness survive this division, or expire? If it survive, then the adhesion of the different parts of the soul is not necessary to its existence; which includes this contradiction—that consciousness is dependant for its being, on a substance which is not necessary to its existence. If it expire, then it must have depended for its existence, not upon the *component parts* of the soul, but upon the *adhesion* of these *component parts;* but in admitting *a mere adhesion* of parts, to be capable of producing what the parts themselves had no power of communicating, is a contradiction. It therfore must follow, that consciousness, perception, &c. cannot inhere in any material substance; and if so, a substance which is immaterial must necessarily be admitted.

If the human soul be material, it must be extended; and if the faculties which we possess depend upon this extended substance, they must be diffu-

sed, or they must not. If they be, they may be divided: but to admit the division of any simple perception of the mind, (which each faculty of the soul must be) is to annihilate the existence of that faculty, and we shall be obliged, in this case, to admit the division of what can then have no real or nominal existence. But if we suppose those faculties not to be diffused, an extended substance is not necessary to their existence; and then it follows, that the soul, which must of itself be extended, can exist abstracted from those faculties which we attribute to it; and that the soul, and its faculties, can have no physical relation, but must exist independent of each other. And if those properties, and this substance, which we have been accustomed to associate together in our minds, have no necessary connection with one another; we must still advance farther to discover a primary principle, the nature of which is congenial to those properties; while the extended substance, with which these properties can have no physical connexion, can afford us no conception of its nature, distinct from animated matter in any of its modes or relations.

SECT. III.

Further Objections against the Soul's Immateriality answered.

THERE is another argument urged against the immateriality of the soul, which is as specious as it is unsound, and is generally stated thus :—" If the " soul be a thinking immaterial substance, and " thinking be essential to its nature, it must follow, " that the soul must always think; but this is con- " trary to what every man experiences. We have " no recollection of what passes in sleep; and hav- " ing no recollection, we are left destitute of all " proof, that thinking, or consciousness at that time

" existed. And to suppose an immaterial substance " to exist, and to suppose consciousness to be es- " sential to its nature, and yet to admit an interval " in which this consciousness can afford no evi- " dence of its existence ; is to admit as certain " what we have no certainty of ; and it is to sup- " pose a man to be conscious, and not conscious at " the same time."

To combat theory with fact and incident, must always be forcible, and sometimes conclusive.— And when theory can be fairly confronted with such incidents, as its design was to invalidate and overcome, fact and incident must always be decisive on the point in debate. But when theory is established on the firm and immovable basis of solid and conclusive reasoning, fact itself must be presented fairly to the mind, to counterbalance the efficacy of such reasonings as it has to oppose.— The phenomena of appearance are no proof of reality. Speciousness may dazzle the eye, but it cannot produce conviction. The philosophic mind investigates with accuracy, and moves with slow but steady steps, from link to link in the great chain of causes and effects.

To give the objection that stability which it claims, it is necessary that it should be made to appear, that every man, or some individual man, does not always think. And when this can be established, the conclusive part of the objection must be admitted ; and it will then appear—that it is contradictory to suppose consciousness to be essential to the nature of an immaterial principle, while an interval can be proved in which this consciousness has no existence. Of every fact which we attempt to establish, we must have some conception ; without this we cannot be certain that it is fact.— And every idea which we have of any fact, supposes the existence of this fact. But for any man to prove, or rather attempt to prove, that the mind

does not always think, is to prove the positive existence of a nonentity. Should it be asserted, that man does not always think, I would ask—How can that fact be known? It must be either deduced from reasoning, must be self evident, or must exist in common experience. And if I mistake not, it is not difficult to prove that it can be in neither. To prove by reasoning, the existence of what is supposed to have no existence, is proving exactly the reverse of what is wanted to establish the supposition—it is proving the existence of a nonentity; which is a contradiction: it cannot, therefore, be known by reasoning.

To suppose it to be self evident, is to suppose the existence of what is supposed to have no existence: and which, could it be once admitted, would necessarily destroy the very supposition it was designed to establish; it would prove exactly the reverse of what it ought. What, therefore, is supposed to have no existence, cannot possibly be self-evident. Neither can it be by common experience. Whatever we experience, we must be conscious of;—without this the very term is done away. It is a contradiction to suppose, that we experience the absence of consciousness, while the very supposition itself, wherever it exists, establishes the fact which we attempt to deny. And for any man to suppose himself destitute of consciousness, is in effect for him to suppose, that he is conscious of the absence of all consciousness,—that he now feels what he does not feel,—and that he now knows what he does not know. It is proving the nonexistence of a thing by the existence of the thing itself. A nonentity, therefore, cannot be proved; and the fact which was necessary to support the conclusive part of the objection, is vanished into air.

Nor would it at all affect the immateriality of the soul, if it could be proved that there were intervals

in which the mind had no apprehension of its own actions. For, that men are not always conscious to themselves of their own consciousness, I readily admit; but it does not follow from hence, that consciousness in these intervals has no existence. It proves a want of perception of the thing, but does not prove the nonexistence of the thing itself. The existence of an action of the mind, and the perception of its existence, are two distinct ideas. The former may exist abstracted from the latter, but the latter cannot exist if the former cease to be.—The existence of a faculty must necessarily precede, in point of time, the perception of its existence; and the action of this faculty must, for the same reason, precede our perception of it. And if existence must necessarily precede our perception of it; our perception is no way necessary to its real existence. It is, therefore, not only possible that the soul may be conscious in the hours of sleep, although we be totally insensible both of those objects which approach the mind, as well as the manner of its operations; but it appears impossible to conceive that the operations of the mind, and our perceptions of them, should be coeval with one another. And what we can form no conception of, must necessarily be to us unknown.

Although the faculty of the soul be always the same, it may, nevertheless, vary in the manner of its operations. Consciousness may diverge *itself* in a thousand directions; but it does not follow from thence, that we must be always conscious of the manner of its operations. It is no more necessary to the abstract idea of consciousness, that we be always sensible of its operations, than it is necessary to the operations themselves, that we should be always sensible of the secret springs by which they move; or those unknown laws by which consciousness itself is governed.

We may be conscious that we *fear*, or *love*; but no man will pretend to say, that he knows by what secret physical powers those passions are excited. Yet while every man is conscious that these passions are excited, he must be sensible, if he permit his reason to act, that his consciousness, and those secret powers by which it is excited, (and of the existence of which he is conscious) can have with one another no physical relation. The principal force of the foregoing objection, seems to lie in the associating together the two ideas, of *consciousness*, and a *perception* of it. But it is evident, that consciousness may exist previous to our perception of it. And if we admit the necessary existence of the former, prior to the latter, it must follow—that a perception of our own consciousness, is not necessary to the *existence* of consciousness itself. If consciousness do not exist previous to our perception of it, it must follow—that our knowledge of a fact, does not depend for its existence on the fact itself; and if this be admitted, it then follows—that we may know a fact which is not a fact; which is a contradiction. But as it is impossible to admit a contradiction, it follows with certainty, that every thing which we perceive must exist prior to our perception of it. And when we admit, though but for a moment, the existence of consciousness, previous to our perception of it, we at once admit, on the permanent basis of demonstration, what the objection pronounces to be an impossibility.

I am well aware, that to this mode of reasoning, another objection will be made. It will be said—"that if the mind may be conscious without having any knowledge of it, it includes this contradiction,—that a man may be conscious, and not conscious at the same time." To make this objection as valid as it is specious, and to render the contradiction which it aims at complete, it should

be made to appear—"that a man may be conscious "of a *fact*, and not conscious of that very *fact* at "the same time." This, however, is not included in the reasonings above; it only supposes that a man may be conscious of one fact, and yet unconscious of another at the same time.

Every man must admit, that we may be conscious of the motion of any given portion of matter, while we may be unconscious of the power which produced it. And it no more implies a contradiction, to be *conscious* of a fact, and yet destitute of any *perception* of that consciousness, than it does to be conscious of motion, and yet to be unconscious of the power which produced it. To suppose ourselves conscious of a *fact*, while we have no consciousness of *that fact*, is a contradiction; but to suppose a consciousness of a fact, while we have no *perception* of that consciousness, is a totally different case. The first is a contradiction perceived by a simple action of the mind, and refuted by itself; the second implies two distinct actions, which may exist together, or without any reciprocal dependance. Our being conscious of any remote object, is a simple action of the mind, operating upon distant objects; while our being *sensible* of it, is a reflex act of the mind, operating upon its own operations. The former must precede in point of time, and therefore exist independent of the latter; the latter, founded upon the former, cannot possibly exist without it. But whether the latter exist or not, it implies neither contradiction nor absurdity.*

* Whether the mind of man be *necessarily* active, without any intermission, is a question of *fact* which is foreign to my present argument. If the abstract possibility can be made out, *that consciousness may exist without our perception of it*, all objections against the soul's immortality, drawn from its inactivity during the hours of sleep, are at once done away. An at-

tempt to decide between *fact* and *possibility*, is, perhaps, equally difficult and injudicious. That *consciousness*, and our *perception* of it, are two distinct ideas, I believe I have sufficiently made out; and although the latter depend upon the former for its existence, yet the former may exist independently of the latter ;—and, therefore, all *reciprocal necessary* connection between them, is rather the produce of prejudice than philosophy.

Whether the intellectual powers be active or dormant, during the recess of nature, is a point of speculation, perhaps, more curious than useful ; but however it may be decided, it can prove nothing against the soul's immortality That we cannot conceive how an immaterial substance (whose *real essence* we are totally unacquainted with) can exist while all those powers and properties are suspended, through the activity of which we can alone be certified of its existence, I am ready to admit ; but it never ought to be forgotten, that *our inability to comprehend, is no argument either against* THEORY *or* FACT. If the human soul be an immaterial substance, it is among the grossest of absurdities to suppose, that God has made its *existence* to depend upon the *continual* activity of its own powers, or our uninterrupted perception of them ;—and unless it can be proved, that the real essence of spirit excludes from its nature a *possibility of suspending its own actions*, it never can be proved, that a suspension of action, and an annihilation of that substance from whence the action flows, are terms synonimous with one another.

SECT. IV.

That the Soul is immaterial, proved by the affections—They inhere in the Soul—Objection founded on external Excitement answered.

THAT there are certain affections in the human mind, is one of those truths which will admit neither of controversy nor denial. And that these affections cannot exist of themselves, independent of some common principle, must be equally certain. For if either hope or fear, pain or pleasure, can be supposed to have a distinct independent existence, they are no longer affections of any substance, but must be *principles* themselves. And then it will follow, that there are in man, as many distinct independent principles, as there are affections of the mind. And if these affections be independent, they can have no physical relation to one another. To suppose a physical relation between principles, which are of themselves independent, is a contradiction; and to suppose that which is independent, to be destitute of self-subsistence, is contradiction also;—it is to suppose it to be a principle, and not a principle at the same time.

Those affections, therefore, which we discover in the human mind, can have but a relative existence; and if so, they must inhere in some common principle, which is capable of them; and this principle must be either material or immaterial—it must be either matter or spirit.

If the soul, in which the affections reside, be matter, it must be either an union of divisible particles, or one single unextended atom, there being no other light in which matter can be viewed, or manner through which it can possibly enter into our conceptions. If we admit the first case, and suppose the soul to be an union of divisible particles, then, either the affections which are supposed

to reside in the soul, (thus constituted) must inhere in each particle of this union, or they must not. If they reside in each particle of this union, and each particle in this union have the affections; then an union of these particles cannot be necessary to the existence of these affections, because the affections are now supposed to reside in each of those particles of which the soul is composed; and in this case, the existence of the soul is not necessary to the existence of those affections, which are supposed to reside within its constituent parts; but in admitting the affections to reside in, and to result from, a cause which is not necessary to their existence, we not only make the soul *necessary* and *unnecessary* to the existence of those affections at the same time, but we make the affections to exist, after we admit it possible that the soul, upon which they depend for their existence, may be destroyed. If we admit the second case, and suppose that each minute particle in this union *have not* the affections residing in them, it must then follow—that an union of particles, all of which are destitute of these affections, can never be necessary to the existence of them. For as no cause or substance, can communicate what it does not possess, and as each particle in this supposed union is supposed destitute of these affections, the affections can never result from a cause which is admitted by the supposition to be devoid from all energy to call them into being. And whether we suppose the affections to depend upon an union of these particles, or upon any single particle in this supposed union; as the former annihilates the cause upon which the affections are supposed to depend, and as the latter attributes to that cause an energy of which, by the supposition itself, it is admitted to be destitute, it demonstratively follows—that matter can in neither case give being to those affections which we discover in the human mind.

Should an union of particles be still insisted on as the necessary constituent parts of the human soul, I would ask—If God were to remove any particle from this supposed union of divisible atoms, would the soul retain the affections or not? If it retain them, then this substracted atom must have been superfluous and unnecessary, which will at once destroy the necessity of such an union of particles; but if the soul would not retain them after an atom is substracted, I would further ask—is the atom thus substracted, cogitative or not? If *cogitative*, the affections must adhere to this single atom, and then all beside are rendered useless and unnecessary; if *uncogitative*, the affections can never be destroyed by the removal of an *uncogitative* atom. In either case, the necessity of an union of particles is destroyed, and the plain consequence is—that the affections can neither exist in, nor result from, any union or combination of particles whatsoever.

As an union of particles, from the arguments I have already adduced, are not only absolutely unnecessary, but altogether incompatible with the existence of the affections, the absurdity will perhaps not be lessened by supposing them to exist in any *single unextended atom.* However minute or magnified this atom may be supposed, it must be incapable of division, for unless this be admitted the supposition cannot exist. For unless it be admitted incapable of divisibility, it will still be an union of divisible particles, and, therefore, attended with the absurdities and contradictions stated above.——But to suppose a divisible substance, (which all matter is) that cannot be divided, is to conceive what is utterly inconceivable:—it is to conceive an *extended* substance which has no extension; or a divisible atom which is incapable of divisibility.

That a capability of division is necessarily included in our idea of matter, I readily grant, it be-

ing impossible to form any idea of matter detached from that of its divisibility: the idea of divisibility being necessarily included in that of matter, makes it incapable from its nature. And therefore, to imagine matter to exist, (as matter) after we have excluded from it any property which is inseparable from its nature, conducts the mind to a palpable contradiction.

But admitting it possible that this contradiction could be dispensed with, and that an atom could exist without extension, or a possibility of division, the difficulty would not thereby be removed. For if the soul be a material atom equally removed from extension and incapable of divisibility, (under which consideration we now view it) it is very certain that it can have no parts, and what has no parts, as it can neither be a compound nor liable to change, can have no variety in its natural tendencies. If then the affections which must be admitted to exist, reside within or result from this atom, they must be uniform and invariable in their manifestations, or we must admit their existence without admitting the existence of any adequate cause. To make any affections of the mind to be uniform and invariable, is to place theory in direct opposition to fact;—it is to annex the idea of immutability to affections which in their own nature must be fleeting, transitory, and unstable. And to admit the existence of the affections, and to pretend to derive them from a cause which we admit to be incapable of producing them, is to make that cause to be *adequate*, and inadequate, to the same purpose, at the same time.

That the affections are mutable and transitory, is as evident as their existence, it being a fact which seems self evident. And if the soul, in which these affections reside, be *a simple, unextended atom*, the soul itself must be uniform and invariably the same; for that atom can admit of no

variety which is devoid of all *extension*, and totally *destitute of parts*. If then variableness and mutability be excluded from this atom, through the simplicity of its nature; and mutability and variableness be the distinguishing characteristics of the affections—how can the affections diverge themselves into such a variety of directions, through an energy which they derive from an atom, from whose nature all variety is excluded, and which therefore cannot confer that variety which they possess? Can the affections, which manifest variety, result from an atom, from the simplicity of whose nature all variety is excluded? A cause which cannot change, must be the same to-day that it was yesterday, and can therefore produce now, no other effects than it did then. And if the affections result from such a cause, either all the affections must be always felt with an equal impression, or the mind can have but one single tendency and direction. In supposing the affections to be always felt with an equal impression, we render it impossible for any affection to be suspended, or to be removed from one object to another: but in admitting that *Theory* which gives immutability to the affections, while the certainty of their suspension, and the removal of them from one object to another, declares that their stability is done away, we blend the effects of this *Theory* with those *facts* which we draw from common experience, and by placing them in opposition to one another, we are driven to this conclusion,—that any affection of the mind may be *present*, and yet *absent*, at the same time. Should we reject this conclusion, and admit the mind to have but one single tendency or direction, we shall be under the necessity of destroying the *nature* of the affections, in order to establish their *existence*. Thus then, if the soul be an atom, whether it be mutable or immutable, as each of the questions involves us in the grossest absurdities, and as every light in which

the supposition can be viewed, involves the grossest of contradictions, the affections we possess can in no case result from matter, neither considered as such, nor in any of its modes or relations.

As, therefore, there are affections in the soul, and these affections cannot arise, either from an assemblage of atoms, or from a single particle, it necessarily follows—that the soul cannot be material. And as *matter* and *spirit*, are the only two subjects with which we are acquainted in the vast empire of nature; it follows, with all the certainty that is necessary to produce conviction, that there must be an immaterial principle in man.

It may, indeed, be said—"that the affections of "the mind are excited by foreign impulses, and "that they depend not upon the nature of the soul, "but on the external application of the exciting "power." This, however, can in no case affect the question. For though the affections may be excited by the impulses of external causes; yet these causes must apply to, and operate upon, an internal subject. Even the supposition of an external impulse, implies an internal recipient power; for where there is nothing to be acted upon, nothing can be produced by any action. It is a contradiction in terms, to suppose that an external impulse can *excite*, where there is nothing to be *excited*.—But if something be admitted to exist previous to its being excited, this carries us back again to the original question; and the previous existence of the subject being admitted, it follows, that it must either be material or immaterial. It has been already proved, that it neither is, nor can be material; and therefore, from the admission of its previous existence, it undeniably follows, that there must be an immaterial substance in man.

It is certain, that no foreign impulses can communicate to matter, any new quality that is not included within those confines which circumscribe

its existence, nor excite within it any affection which these boundaries exclude. And as matter can never act but through the influence of mutual contact, all the affections that are supposed to be excited by *Rectitude*, *Justice*, and *Virtue* (which cannot be material in themselves), are at once rendered visionary and chimerical. But as *Rectitude*, *Justice*, and *Virtue*, must not only be admitted to exist, but to exist in a region to which material bodies cannot extend, and to extend their influence to a variety of human actions, it is certain, that these principles can only operate upon a substance whose nature is not thus circumscribed by the boundaries of matter; and the affections which these principles excite, plainly demonstrate the existence of a substance to which matter and motion can bear no affinity or relation, and therefore—though foreign impulses may excite, there must be an immaterial principle in man.

SECT. V.

Intellectual Endowments are different—The cause of this is not physical—It is occasioned by the Organization of the Body, and the Operation of Moral Evil.

THAT there is a vast difference between the intellectual endowments of individuals, is too evident to admit of any dispute; but whether this difference be *physical* or *moral*, is quite another question. If it be physical, we must look for this variation in the original and primary state of things:—If it be moral, we must look to some cause independent of the original state of man.

Could we conceive, that the variations we discover in men, depended upon the primary formation of the human intellect, we must suppose, that the Almighty God had created beings of the same

species, totally different from one another. Beings, however, which are the same in *species*, must be the same in *nature* ; and, if so, they must be the same in those physical endowments, from whence alone can be denominated their real identity. But if those endowments from whence identity is denominated, be found totally different in the same species of beings, it leads us to this flat contradiction—that those beings are the same in nature, while they are totally different in those endowments from whence that identity of nature is denominated. It therefore must follow, that the real or nominal difference we discover, cannot arise from the *physical* origin of things.

If the sensible difference we discover between men, depend upon the primary formation of man, this difference must be forever inseparable from human nature. For whatever is physically included in any nature, is necessary to the identity of that nature ; and the instant in which we can conceive it to be extracted, that instant the original identity of that nature can be no more.

Does not, then, the supposing this difference to arise from the physical causes of things, cast a reflection on the Great Creator? And in admitting this, must we not suppose, that in a superior intellect, God has communicated a superfluity of excellence: or, in one that is inferior, that he has withheld what is necessary to the perfection of its nature? And in either case, are we not led to accuse the Deity of *imperfections* or *imprudence?* But as neither can attach to God, we cannot conceive that the difference between men, can arise from the physical nature of things.

To continue through all eternity the human race, as a distinct link in the vast chain of Being, it is necessary that their identity be preserved ; and so far as human discernment can penetrate, this can only be effected, by preserving the physical origin

of their natures. But if the apparent incongruity we discover in men, exist in the physical essence of the human soul, it must remain unalterably the same forever, and reproach, through all eternity, the Deity himself with the imperfections of his works. But is it consistent with those notions we form of that God—" in whose sight the stars are " not pure," and whom Plato calls—*the ineffable Beauty*, to suppose that this can be the case? Can we conceive, that either intellectual *superfluity*, or intellectual *imperfection*, can enter heaven? Or if each were admitted thither, can we conceive, that the harmony of heaven can arise from those chords of dissonance? Or is it possible, that such a thing can ever exist, as *physical imperfection?* Certainly not. Does not each thing, whether animate or inanimate, possess every physical perfection necessary to its nature? And whether its endowments be exalted or debased, does it not possess every physical perfection necessary to its station? And if every physical perfection be possessed by any individual of any given species, must not each individual of the same species be an equal possessor? And without this, can those individuals be of the same species? But if each be an equal possessor, must there not be a physical equality through all individuals of the same species, both in material and immaterial nature? Certainly there must.—And if so, the nominal difference we discover, cannot arise from the physical essence of things. To admit any thing to be physically included in any nature, which is not essential to that nature, is a contradiction. And to suppose any thing to be essential to any nature, which is not applicable to every individual of that nature, is a contradiction also: nor will the absurdity be lessened, in supposing an adventitious difference to result from the fixed essences of things; and therefore, a *physical* difference in the nature of the human soul, cannot be that, which distinguishes man from man.

That these differences are purely *adventitious*, I readily admit. But while they are admitted to be adventitious, the physical nature of the soul must be totally discharged ; and we must apply to another source, for that inequality which we discover in the intellectual powers of man.

To a mind capable of penetrating deeper than the mere surfaces of things, it must instantly occur, that since the introduction of *Moral Evil*, the state of man must have been considerably changed.—The human body, lying open to the innovations of natural evil, is exposed to calamities in various forms. Diseases and misfortunes, inhumanities and distress, are but some of those evils that "life is "heir to," and these are but the harbingers of death. An exposure to those calamities, under which the "whole creation groans," must have had a peculiar influence on the mechanism of the human body,—must have materially impeded the operation of physical causes, and considerably affected the organization of man.

It is through the organs of sense alone, that we have any communication with external objects ; and all impressions we thus receive, must be *clear* or *indistinct*, in proportion to the evidence with which the impulse is communicated. Every defect in the organ must obstruct that evidence, and impede the impression, in proportion to its magnitude. Defects must be almost as various as the individuals who possess them ; and this being admitted, leaves the apparent inequality of man, no longer an undecided point ;—the physical essence of the soul is no longer included in the question ; the obstructions are purely adventitious, and the phenomena present us with totally another cause.

By what secret power the intellect lays hold on the objects of sensation, is to us altogether unknown ; it is a subject concealed too deep for philosophic researches, and the fact only serves to tell

us, that we are strangers to ourselves. Be these things, however, as they may, observation will convince us, that while the body is exposed to those diseases and misfortunes that are incident to man, (and which in this depraved state of being are inseparable from us) the mind is subjected to error, enslaved to appetite, and under the direction of ungovernable passions. The empire of reason is invaded with hostile inclinations, and the observer is presented with an awful picture of intellectual ruins.

In this mutilated state of things,—is it possible that physical causes can perform their operations without obstructions? If they can, these impediments can be impediments no longer; if not, we discover a cause abstracted from all physical operations. Every defect, whether corporeal or mental, is a deviation from physical rectitude. And to imagine that any physical cause, can produce an effect, which is contrary to the nature of that power which produced it, is a contradiction in terms.

If a physical cause can produce those inequalities that are so visible in the human intellect, it must produce them invariably; unless this be admitted, it cannot be a physical cause. But to suppose an inequality to be produced invariably, is an absurdity too gross to be pursued,—an *invariable variation* is a contradiction in terms. It is, therefore, to the inroads of *moral evil*, operating through *the organization of the body*, upon the intellectual powers, that we must look for that variation which we daily discover in men.

A physical difference in nature, implies a real difference in species; and a real difference in species, destroys the only criterion from whence can be denominated the identity of man. But as both *species* and *identity* are preserved, it must undeniably follow, that the real and nominal essence on which both species and identity depend, must be

preserved also ; and the evident result is—that there neither is, nor can be, any physical difference between the individuals of the human race.

If this reasoning be admitted, and admitted as conclusive, it fully answers that question—"Where-" in consists the difference between a wise man " and a fool?" Not in the physical essence of their natures, but in the organization of the body, and the inroads of moral evil on the intellectual powers.

As the intellect is accessible or inaccessible to the evidence of external objects, we form accurate or inaccurate conceptions of them. And in an exact proportion to the internal perception being clear and shining, or confused and indistinct, we reason on this ground-work of human knowledge, and form complex ideas—crude and inconsistent, or incontrovertible and decisive. Obstructions in the organs, must always mutilate the images which pass through them, and from this cause, they must ever approach the intellect with distorted features, and make impressions suitable to their natures.

From this confused and indistinct mass of materials, it is—that the mind must begin its operations. And while these organical obstructions, and broken images of externals, impede its progress, it can never arrive to an adequate knowledge of the import and relation of things, which may be physically within its reach.

Unable to form a proper estimate, or to discover the mutual dependencies, and influences, which subsist between things ; it is impossible, in ten thousand instances, that any rational conceptions can be formed, or proper conclusions drawn. And while destitute of those materials, which are the foundations of human knowledge, it is impossible that any complex idea can be formed with accuracy or precision. And while external objects are distorted, by being viewed through discoloured

mediums, it is under the influence of these distortions, that the mental powers perform their operations, and discover to the understanding, the phenomenon which is so visible in the intellectual world.

But while the organical passages, through which external objects present their images to the mind, appear so evidently in a disordered state, it is but rational to conclude, that even the immaterial substance itself, has undergone a considerable change in its *moral tendency*, but not in its *physical nature*. And the mental disorder too fatally guarantees the awful conjecture. The internal essence of its physical nature is too refined for human discernment, and of a nature too remote to be explored. It is from a discovery of its effects alone, that we may hazard conjectures on its state; and those effects sufficiently warrant the supposition. And if so, the causes of deviation from rectitude, may be sufficiently ascertained from the influence of *moral evil*, without obliging us to have recourse to its *physical nature*. The physical nature of the soul may be invariably the same, although appearances may seem to indicate the very reverse.—Mere appearance is no criterion of fact; and though the human powers may deviate from one another, it no more follows, that there is not an *immaterial substance* in man, than that there are no such species as those we denominate human, because we differ in *features* from one another.

SECT. VI.

Animal Vitality.—Instinct and Reason.

THAT there is diffused through all animated nature, a certain principle of vitality, is one of those truths which supercedes the necessity of all proof. It is a principle, every human being feels diffused through every part, and forms that insuperable line, which divides all animate from inanimate nature. Nor is this principle confined to man alone; every animated being is made an equal possessor of it, though with different degrees of acuteness, from the "unwieldly elephant," down "to the green myriads of the peopled grass." To separate this vital principle from any animated being, without destroying its present state of existence, is utterly impossible; but whether this principle of *vitality* belong to an *immaterial substance* or not, is a totally distinct question.

Passing beyond that surface of things, where the mind floats in a shoreless ocean of uncertainties, we enter a region which popular observation cannot explore. In this intellectual region, where apparent reason operates in all its gradations, there, however, must be some line of demarkation, that distinguishes the *animal* from the *man:* but where this line can be drawn, or where the boundaries can be fixed, is to me a point of almost inexplicable difficulty; and yet to fix on some discriminating criterion, is a point which must first be ascertained, before any conclusions can be deduced therefrom. Among those faculties that present themselves to the mind, there are none which I can discover, so appropriate as *instinct* and *reason;* but the shades which divide them from each other, are so minute, and so nearly allied, that they lose themselves in one another, by tints which are almost imperceptible; and we pass their boundaries, without disco-

vering our situation, till we find ourselves on the confines of an opposite extreme.

It is foreign to my present design, to inquire into the various active operations, either of *instinct* or *reason*. I only wish to discriminate between them,—to mark their respective relations to their original causes, and their necessary connections therewith: and in this view, I conceive the former to be founded upon *sensation*, and the latter upon *reflection*. To suppose the former to exist where there is no sensation, is a contradiction; and to suppose the latter to exist where there is no reflection, is an absurdity too gross to be admitted. If instinct can exist where there is no sensation, it can include neither energy nor action; and if instinct exist abstracted from all *energy* and *action*, it must exist without having any existence. And in supposing reason to operate without, or to exist abstracted from, all reflection, we must suppose it to act without either *perception* or *judgment*; and to decide upon the certainty of that, which is avowedly unknown, and without the knowledge of which, no rational decision can ever be obtained.—Instinct, therefore, must be founded upon sensation, and reason upon reflection.

But if sensation be necessary to the existence of instinct, and reflection to that of reason, neither instinct nor reason can have any positive existence, and therefore can only be relative terms. If instinct have a real being, it must exist abstracted from all action; for whatsoever exists positively, must have a being before it can possibly act; and what has a positive existence, must be independent of all action. But if instinct exist abstracted from action, it can have no connection with sensation, for sensation itself must be the result of action: and to suppose any thing to have a *necessary* connection with sensation, from which it is possible to exclude the idea of *action*, is a contradiction.

If all instinct be limited in the nature of its existence, and confined wholly to those objects which are capable of exciting sensation, *corporeal existence* must form those lines, beyond the boundaries of which it cannot pass. To admit any thing to have a positive existence, which is not independent, is a contradiction in terms; and to suppose the independence of that which cannot pass the boundaries of corporeal existence, while nothing physical obstructs such an action, is to suppose it to be independent, and not independent at the same time.

As a contradiction must ever be inadmissible, it follows,—that instinct, whatever it may be, can have but a relative existence;—a relative existence must always be dependant on that object to which it is indebted for its being, and can no longer exist, than it is excited by foreign action. If instinct be in all animals the central point, where all the lines of organization meet, through which external objects are capable of communicating their impulses; instinct can only be the medium through which the creature is directed to its intended end, but of itself it can have no self-determining power.

If instinct have a self-determining power, it can be no longer dependant on the impulses of sensation; but to abstract the idea of sensation from that of instinct, and to suppose instinct to exist after this abstraction, is to attribute to it, a power which is precluded by the very nature of its existence. An idea of instinct, which does not include the idea of action, is a contradiction; and therefore, wherever instinct be supposed to have an existence, the idea of action cannot be excluded; which action must be either from itself, or excited by the impressions of foreign impulses. If it be from itself, it is at once raised into a state of independence, which, excluding all external impulses, annihilates its very nature. It must therefore follow—that as action is necessary to the idea of instinct, and as this action

cannot be from itself, it must be impressed by that foreign power which communicates its impulses ; and instinct can only be the *medium* or *censorium*, through which this foreign power acts, to produce those effects which we discover in animal life.

If this reasoning be admitted, it will follow also —that the instinctive properties which are perceived, must not only have a relative and dependant existence, but they can continue no longer than those causes conspire to operate ; which instinct is the medium of, and on which it must entirely depend. A relative idea can exist no longer than it is in contact with the influencing power ; and when that contact ceases, all relations must evaporate and expire. Animal action can only be excited by sensation ; and the action must ever be in proportion to the impulse. And whether the cause be physical or moral, there must be a contact previous to any operation ; and when the capacity becomes inaccessible to impulsion, the ideas of instinct and action must be precluded through necessity.

If instinct were supposed to have the power of election, where opposite sensations excite, and where no previous preponderation had given it a bias, it could be no longer excited by sensation.— An elective power supposes in that Being which possesses it, a principle of judgment, with which instinct can have no kind of connexion. Instinct must, therefore, be dependant upon sensation, and where the exciting powers are hostile to each other, it must necessarily follow the strongest impulse.

But while we behold a principle of animation diffused through all animal nature, distinguishing such portions of matter which are animated, from those that lie in a state of passiveness ; and while we behold the inferior orders of animal creation, acting under those impulses which preclude the ideas of judgment, and election, we discern a supe-

rior principle in man. This superior principle the Almighty has stamped upon us at our primary formation ; and under its guidance and direction, has placed the whole economy of human actions.—Whether we have acted conformably to the influences of this polar star, or deviated from its directions, is rather foreign to my present design. It is to the sacred writings we are indebted for this information ; and in those sacred books it is, that we must find the *perfect* standard of right and wrong.

If this superior principle, to which we have uniformly given the name of *reason*, were nothing different from instinct, the *brutal* and *human* natures must have been physically the same. We might have differed from them, it is true, as one animal differs from another ; but if there were nothing in either nature, which the other did not, and could not, possess, their physical identity must have been the same.

It may, however, not be difficult to ascertain, that *reason* is different from *instinct*, in its *source*, in its *nature*, in its *operations*, and in its *end*. And if it can be thus ascertained, it must produce conviction, in opposition to the indications of appearances.

Whatever affections reason may possess, or howsoever it may be diversified in the manner of its operations, it is certain that it can have no positive independent existence. For if reason have an independent existence, it can have no *necessary* connexion with any positive Being. But the instant we suppose *reason* to exist, while we exclude from it the idea of a reasonable *substance*, to support its existence ; we admit reason to exist, without admitting the existence of any thing reasonable, which is a contradiction. If, therefore, reason cannot have any independent existence, (which must be admitted) it must rely on something capable of

producing it, for its support. This must either be *matter* or *spirit.* In supposing it to be matter, we must either suppose matter to be reasonable in itself, or to be capable of producing what it has no power to produce. The former case is contradicted by its physical divisibility, and inertness ; and the latter includes a contradiction. It therefore follows, that reason cannot subsist of itself, nor be produced by *matter ;* and therefore, from the certainty of its Being, it must result from spirit, it being the only member of the alternative. Thus, reason must be different in its original source from that of instinct ; and if different in its source, it must be different in its nature also.

It is the *nature* of reason, not to be guided by the impulse of sensation, but to follow the directions of judgment. Judgment must be founded upon *discrimination,* for where there can be no discrimination, there can be no *judgment ;* and where there is no *judgment,* there can be no *reason.* If reason be the active result of judgment, the idea of judgment is necessary to its Being. And if the idea of judgment be necessary to its Being, a discrimination between two or more objects must necessarily enter into our abstract idea of judgment, without which it can have no existence. If, then, the perception of difference, between two or more objects, which present themselves to the mind, be necessary to the idea of judgment, and the idea of judgment be necessary to the idea of reason, it must follow—that *reason* and *instinct* must be totally distant in their *natures* from one another: the former striking its roots in an immaterial substance, and the latter in those sensations which are excited by animal impulses.

Nor does this difference terminate here. It is necessary to the nature of reason, not merely to follow the real or apparent good that is immediately presented to it ; but to trace the object proposed,

through all its labyrinths, previous to its adoption of it. To reflect on the past, to investigate the present, and to calculate upon the future, are all necessary to the nature of reason. For could we suppose, that reason could adopt without reflecting, investigating, or calculating, we should make reason to exist without reason, which is a contradiction. And as neither of these ideas, can possibly be included in our idea of the abstract nature of instinct, we are here presented with a specific difference between the *animal* and the *rational* powers.

If, from this difference in nature, we turn to the operations of each, we shall find the same variations. It is the province of instinct to *gratify* appetite, but the province of reason to lay it under *restraint.* If instinct be capable of restraining appetite, it must thus act either from necessity or choice. If from *necessity*, it must act in opposition to itself, and this will end in a contradiction; if from *choice*, it can no longer be under the dominion of sensation. A contradiction is inadmissible, and an abstraction of instinct from sensation is refuted by fact.—Instinct, therefore, cannot restrain that appetite, which its nature is to gratify. If instinct be at once capable of *restraining* and *gratifying* appetite, instead of acting under the direction of sensitive impulses, it must have an elective power; and what has an elective power, must derive its actions from itself. And to that which derives all its actions from itself, the impulses of sensation must be arbitrary and adventitious; and what is arbitrary and adventitious to any subject, or idea, may be abstracted from either; but to suppose a case, where instinct may survive its contact with sensitve impulses, is to suppose it to exist and not to exist at the same time.

But while, from the nature of its existence, the restraint of appetite must be necessarily excluded

from the idea of that which blindly gratifies it, we behold in reason an elective power.

To the existence of that faculty, which acts under the direction of an internal elective power, *perception* must be absolutely necessary; and where there is perception, there must be an object which is perceived. And it is equally certain, that where but one object is presented to the understanding, the only alternative is—either to adopt or to reject it. It is in this state, that nothing but an elective power can operate. And where but one object is presented to the mind, and this object (if congenial to it) be rejected, it is there we can discover an elective power, and be fully assured that reason there exists. It may indeed be asked—"If reason "reject the only object which is presented to the "mind, and there be nothing in that object uncon-"genial to its nature, on what principle is that ob-"ject rejected?" I answer, because I conceive reason to be founded upon reflection, and because it examines deeper than the surfaces of things. The present good is but a part of her province; she reviews the past, anticipates the future, and forms her decisions from the estimate of all.

It must, however, appear very certain, that this can only be effected by abstraction; and by looking forward beyond the influence of present motives, to a certainty of conclusion, in which nothing but abstraction can become its guide. If, then, reason in its operations can calculate upon consequences, remote from that object which first excited its attention, and with which that object has no apparent connexion; it is certain, that reason must, in this case operate in a region, within the confines of which, instinct can never enter; and this leaves us in possession of a decisive difference between the *operations* of instinct and reason.

SECT. VII.

The Subject of Instinct and Reason continued.

THAT man is an *animal*, as well as a *rational being*, is a position which almost claims to be self-evident; but where the *animal* powers end, and where the *rational* begin, is a point which cannot be so easily ascertained. There are, however, many instances in which these powers differ from one another, both in their nature, and their operations, beside those already mentioned.

It is the province of reason, to examine abstract propositions;—to ascertain the simple perceptions which are necessary to their existence;—to travel through their various modes and relations, and to identify them by definition. But can any man suppose, that mere instinct can distinguish between *goodness* and *mercy*? Or that instinct can identify those simple perceptions, which are necessary to either of those abstract ideas? Can instinct distinguish between a simple and a complex idea? Or can it separate those ideas which have been uniformly associated together, though they have with each other no kind of physical relation? If instinct, by the locality of its existence, be unequal to that task which reason can accomplish, and which from mere instinct we could never learn; it is a decisive proof, that reason and instinct are as different in their operations, as they are distinct in their natures from one another.

Nor are there wanting, a variety of instances, in which reason and instinct are at variance with one another; in which there is an irreconcilable hostility subsisting between them; and which could have had no existence, if reason and instinct were the same, or originated in the same source.* There

* On the future life of brutes, many things have been said, and much has been written; and both for

is not, perhaps, an instance, either of *moral* or *retributive* justice, where this is not the case. Reason and instinct are invariably at war with respect to distinctions in *property;* and those boundaries which are fixed by *reason*, may, and are considered by *instinct*, as an infringement upon natural

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and against the subject, many forcible arguments have been employed. An attempt to *decide* on such an important point in a few "straggling propositions," or a solitary note, would be both immodest and indiscreet. The thoughts which I have offered on this subject, are perfectly new to me; but whether they be admitted as conclusive or not, the decision can in no way affect the main purport of this essay. For although it could be proved, that brutes have an immaterial principle, and though the immortality of their natures could be deduced therefrom, it will neither destroy nor lessen the proof of an immaterial and immortal spirit in man.

The acute reasonings drawn from the *vis inertia* of matter, by Mr. *Baxter*, together with the arguments advanced by Mr. *Smith*, are to me neither convincing nor conclusive. The heavy objections which may be advanced against the hypothesis of each, are to me more forcible than their arguments, however plausible they may appear.

How creatures, that are not subjected to any law here, can be made the subjects of rewards or punishments hereafter, I confess I do not perceive; neither can I discern how beings, that are incapable of intellectual enjoyments, can derive happiness from sources which they have no appetites to relish: but I would not urge either case as an argument against possibility. Yet I fear, that the admission of the belief of the immortality of brutes, will so far violate those distinctions which God has placed between the different orders of intelligent and animated beings, that we shall not be sufficiently guarded against the adoption of equivocal generation—a doctrine which has been justly exploded by Mr. *Ray*, in his book, entitled, "*The Wisdom of God in the Creation.*"

right. The calls of instinct, aim at nothing but the gratification of appetite and desire, abstracted from all subserviency; while the voice of reason imposes a restraint, and compels it to be subservient to the principles of immutable justice. And therefore they must be different from each other.

It may, indeed, be asked—"Whether reason "must not *necessarily* follow the impulse of mo- "tive?" This, I confess, I rather doubt. I rather conceive, that when a new motive is presented to the understanding, the attention of the soul is awakened by it from a dormant state. This impulse cannot be excited by previous choice, but presents itself, unsolicited, to our view; but it does not follow from hence, that the judgment must adopt its dictates. Motives only awaken the mind from a torpid state to examine their propriety; but the election of their dictates is the result of judgment, and in this stage of the mind's progress, *volition** can have no existence.

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* It is not improbable but by advancing the observations suggested above, I may be thought, by many, to advance sentiments which include in them the ideas of *fatality* and *destiny*. Those among my acquaintances, whose sentiments are congenial with my own, may think I have given them an occasion of offence; and those who think differently, will perhaps be offended if I attempt to explain. I should, however, be very sorry to be the occasion of offence to either:—a subject on which the world has been so long divided, will have its votaries on either side; but as equivocation is with me a despicable trait of character, I feel no hesitation in avowing those sentiments which I have adopted.

It is a question which has long agitated the controversial world, "Whether man be a *free* or a *necessary* agent?" On both sides of this question many able pens have been employed, and many volumes have been produced; written, I am sorry to observe, with as much acrimony and invective, as with an apparent aim to

If reason *necessarily* follows the impulse of motive, motive must be the active *cause* of all its ac-

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universal mental empire. With all deference to those names whose writings have kept alive the flame of controversial war, by endeavouring to extinguish it; I fear that they have shewn, not merely a wish to judge for themselves, but to think for, and dictate to, others.

If I have a right to think for myself, every other man has the same right; and an attempt to impose my creed upon the belief of another, merely because I think it right, is a piece of arrogance which too plainly characterizes the mind that adopts it. The mind of another may be silenced by the sorceries of argument, without being proselited to that sentiment by which it is refuted. It is in this case rather dragooned into a compliance, than proselited to belief. The weight of evidence is alone able to produce rational conviction; and this weight of evidence, will operate in proportion as it can have access unto the mind. It is on these principles, that I attempt to offer to the public my thoughts on this point, in the following note. Those whose minds enter into a train of thinking similar to my own, may feel weight in the following thoughts; and those who do not, will do me no injury, and give me no offence.

It has been frequently asked by the advocates of destiny, "If God foresee all future events, and those events "cannot happen otherwise than God foresees them, how "can human actions be contingent? If they be con-"tingent, can God foresee them; if not, must not man "be a necessary agent?" Arguments like these are the most plausible of any I have hitherto met with; and I am inclined to think, that all their energy is derived from associating together two distinct ideas, which in themselves have no relation—*predestination and prescience*. The difference in these two ideas will appear the instant we trace them to their sources.

Predestination is evidently founded upon the idea of infinite power, which necessarily calls those actions into being, that are supposed to depend on previous des-

tions. And as all causes must exist previously to their own effects, we must attribute to *mere motive*,

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tiny for their existence; and to abstract the idea of power from those actions, which necessarily depend upon that power for their existence, is at once to annihilate their active original cause, and consequently to destroy their own existence. And were it possible to annihilate that connexion, which subsists between that infinite power, which influences into being all human actions; and were it possible that those actions could remain, after they were separated from infinite power; all human actions would be contingent, and consequently predestination could be no more. I therefore conceive predestination to include a necessary connexion, between *human actions* and *infinite power;* that human actions necessarily flow from infinite power, are inseparable from, and necessarily dependant on it; that if predestination be admitted, the present state of man is a state of mere passiveness, and that the idea of *contingency* can have no existence.

But while predestination is founded on the idea of infinite power, the *knowledge* of future events is founded upon the idea of *infinite discernment*, with which the idea of power has no necessary connexion. It would be absurd to suppose that God were infinite in his power, *because* he possesed infinite discernment, or that he were infinite in his discernment, *because* he possessed infinite power. Infinite power, and infinite discernment, must therefore be attributes which are *coessential* in the Deity. If the knowledge of any action be founded upon the discernment of that action, the very discernment of it presupposes the previous existence of that action, of which this is the discernment. Existence, in the very nature of things, must necessarily precede, in order of being, all discernment of its modes and accidents; for nothing can be supposed to be known previous to the *supposition* of its own existence. And though we admit that infinite discernment is previous to the *positive existence* of the action itself; yet the action itself exists in *idea,* and is a future ac-

an abstract state of existence; while the mind is left to form this abstract idea, independent of those

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tion actually existing in idea, as much as the discernment of this action is future knowledge, existing previous to that action, on which the existence of this discernment is founded Here, then, the action itself must be supposed to be in being, and the discernment of this action founded upon that existence: but neither the necessity, nor contingency of this action, can be inferred from that discernment, which only presupposes the previous existence of the simple action, and with which its necessity or contingency can have no relation.

It will now be asked, "Could this action have been "different from what it is? if it could, how could in- "finite discernment have decided upon its certainty; "if not, what is become of the contingency of human "actions?" However specious this question may appear in itself, it seems to me to be upon the whole, a mere fallacy. It has been already proved, that the action itself must be *supposed* to be in existence, and the discernment of this action is founded *upon* that supposition; for it would be a contradiction in terms, to suppose any thing could be discerned, which had not even an ideal existence; so that the question is nothing more than if it were asked, Can an action, after it is past, be different from itself? To this question I would answer, *No;* and yet I cannot conceive that the *contingency* of that action can be affected thereby, because its contingency depended not on the discernment of its final issue, but on the adoption of those mutable motives, which, when adopted, led to this end, and which this action was the result of, without in the least affecting the action itself. The action which is thus discerned, is the effect of elective adoption, and the *necessary* termination of such motives as were adopted. To suppose that the action itself, under the direction of these elected motives, could be different from what it is, is to suppose that these motives could have produced an action contrary to their own conclusions, which

effects, which can alone denominate it to be an active cause.

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is a contradiction. That these mutable motives might have been differently elected, I admit; but then infinite discernment could have penetrated the result of that election,—have looked through the contingency, and have seen a different conclusion, with as much precision as it does the present; and whatever mutations these motives might have assumed, infinite discernment is still equal to the penetration, and capable of looking to the same certainty of conclusion. And altho' we suppose these motives to be subject to ten thousand mutations, to be subject to as many different elections, and capable of ending in as many conclusions—yet these conclusions cannot elude the penetration of infinite knowledge, which arises from the plenitude of infinite discernment; and which must ever be, while *finite* is placed within the reach of *infinite*—and while the Creator is capable of comprehending all created capacities. The *power* and *discernment* of God, must, therefore, be ever superior in their extensiveness, to the mutations which human contingencies are capable of undergoing; and we can thus conceive all human actions to be known to God, without having recourse to that *destiny*, which is supposed to influence them into being.

To ask, therefore—whether an *action* which is *foreseen*, can be *different* from the foreknowledge of it, is no other than to ask—Whether an action can be different from itself? To this question I would answer, no; because the question itself is founded *upon the idea of the action's being known*. And if the action be known it must be supposed, at least, as much *past* as that knowledge of it which is founded thereon. To conceive, therefore, that *absolute foreknowledge* and *eternal decree*, are similar in their effects, is, I conceive, an imposition upon the mind. If a superior Being could be supposed capable of possessing infinite discernment and knowledge, abstracted from all power, this Being would be as capable of looking through the contingen-

The great end of reason, is to regulate the impulses of *desire*, and to render appetite subservient

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cy of human actions, as though he were possessed of infinite power. But we cannot conceive the idea of a decree, abstracted from the idea of *infinite power;* and therefore it follows, that *prescience* and *destiny* are totally different in their natures, as well as founded upon two distinct attributes of Deity—*discernment* and *power;* which, in the present consideration, can have no necessary connexion. The necessary effect of a decree, is the positive accomplishment of it; but the necessary *effect* of absolute foreknowledge, is what I have never yet been able to discover.

Every action must bear some relation to *the knowledge of* it, because the knowledge of an action is the communication of itself; without this relation, there can be no knowledge. And to say, that an action may be, or is known, while that action which is thus known, is in futurity, *even in idea*, while the knowledge of it is *now actually existing*, is to make the effect to exist prior to its own cause; and is to suppose a relation between that which is, and that which is not; which is a glaring contradiction.

Whenever we form an idea of *prescience*, and speak of it as applying to the infinitely wise God, according to our weak perceptions of His attributes; we either behold him stepping into futurity, and there beholding actions in their dark recesses, or calling futurity to his bar, to develope its hidden mysteries; but in either case, the action itself, and the knowledge of that action, must be brought into contact with one another.

That the relative ideas of *past* and *future*, must be inapplicable to the eternal God, is too evident to require proof, or admit denial, there being but few abstract propositions more certain; and therefore, the idea of successive existence, must be precluded by the Omnipresency of his nature: and in the physical relation in which things stand to God, nothing can be said to be remote from him. If, then, we admit a future action to be known to, and present with God, we in

to the principles of immutable justice: while the great end of instinct, is to gratify the impulses of

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futurity admit its *actual existence*; and while we admit this event which is future to us, to be present with, and therefore known to God, we admit, that nothing which is in futurity to us, can be remote from *Him*; but we behold this future action, actually existing *now* before God. Here, then, we behold the certainty of the action perfectly existing before God, and perfectly remote from the relative idea of futurity; and that action which is future with *us*, is in actual existence with *Him*.

Whatever event or action is said to be foreknown, can only be so in relation to us, but not to God. With him the event or action is only simply *known*. And as the simple discernment of an action, necessarily presupposes the pre-existence of that action; the *action* itself is not subsequent upon, but antecedent to that discernment, which is founded upon it. If an action, which is future with us, be *totally destitute of all existence*, in the most absolute sense of the word, it never can be an object even of infinite discernment, because the supposition includes a contradiction; for he who discerns that which is destitute of all existence, discerns what is admitted even by the supposition itself to be *undiscernible*. The *existence* of an action, is therefore necessary to the *discernment* of it. If, then, an event which is future to us, be actually present with God; and if the actual existence of an event be necessary to his discernment of it, its mutable state is already past, and its destiny is as inevitable, as those events which are enrolled in the antediluvian annals. And as the *knowledge* of an event, must necessarily presuppose the *previous existence* of that event, the knowledge of it can never influence that event, or any of its peceding mutations, upon which this knowledge itself must depend for its own existence.

Discernment itself, whether divine or human, necessarily implies an object; for it is a contradiction in terms, to suppose any being to *discern* an object which

desire, independent of right or wrong. *Right* and *wrong*, are what instinct can form no conception of; but without right and wrong, reason can have no existence. Whether what instinct adopts, may

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we conceive has no kind of existence. To suppose that the *discernment* of an object may exist, while we suppose the object itself to be a pure *nonentity*, is to suppose the object to be at once *discernible* and not *discernible*, to be an *entity* and a *nonentity*, at the same time.

However distant the modes of God's discernment are from those of our own, yet when we ask the question—*How can any thing be different from what God foresees it?* we have recourse to our own modes of apprehension, and incorporate in that question, the idea of successive duration, with his mode of apprehension; although in our *abstract* reasoning upon it, we exclude all kinds of succession from that idea.

In all our abstract reasoning upon the prescience of God, we exclude the idea of *successive existence*, and speak the language of philosophy and reason; but when we apply the prescience of God, to the contingency of human action, we lose sight of the only *exclusive* foundation on which the question can stand, and incorporate with it the relative ideas of *past* and *future*; and thus re-adopt that successive existence, which we had previously excluded from our abstract idea of the prescience of God. It is for want of this distinction, that we have such confusion in our ideas on the subject. Only let the idea of *successive existence*, be excluded from incorporating with that of prescience, and the difficulty will disappear, the question will assume an inoffensive form, and the prescience of God will be perfectly reconcileable with the contingency of human actions.

Finally, an action which is future with us, must be in itself either an *entity* or a *nonentity*, in the most perfect sense of the words; if an *entity*, it has all that existence which I contend for; if a *nonentity*, it cannot be an object either of infinite discernment or knowledge, for he that beholds or knows a perfect nonenity, must behold and know *nothing*.

issue in truth or error, is what can excite within it no solicitude; but the *final issue* of things, is the great point to which reason directs its steps. Reason and instinct must, therefore, be essentially different—in their *origin*, in their *natures*, in their *operations*, and in their *end*. Instinct denominates the *animal*, and reason the *man*.

SECT. VIII.

Memory and Reflection—The former visible in animal Powers, the latter depends on an immaterial Principle—Sensation—It may be annihilated, but the human Soul cannot.

THE abstract ideas of *memory* and *reflection*, however they may be allied, must be considerably different in themselves, from one another; the former we discover in the animal powers, but the latter only in an *immaterial principle*. Memory, no doubt, relates to sensation, but can have no relation to any thing but what is *past*; while reflection, commencing its operations independent either of *past* or *future*, forms its conclusions on the agreement or disagreement of those ideas which we associate together, which to memory and instinct must be forever unknown. Instinct can never operate, abstracted from the impulses of sensation; but *reflection* begins its operations where sensation ends—where the impulses of sensation cannot excite, and moves in a region of which instinct can form no conception.

Sensation itself must necessarily be *diffused* through every department of animal being; and must of itself be as extensive in its *diffusion*, as the Being which possesses it. To be assured that it is a something which depends upon the modification of *body*, we need only to advert to the amputation of any bodily part. In proportion as these

parts undergo a separation from each other, the capacity of sensation must be reduced in its extension, and the power of feeling must be confined within a narrower sphere. The acuteness, however, can have but little or no relation to its diffusion; for although the amputation of the parts of body, may contract it in the extent of its operations, those parts which remain will preserve their acuteness uninjured and entire. And though we consider sensation as one great *whole*, yet the reduction of its diffusion, must necessarily be injurious to that *whole*, while the acuteness remaining plainly demonstrates, that sensation cannot arise from an independent principle.

A capacity which is thus capable of being reduced, must, through the progress of the means of that reduction, be finally *annihilated;* for it is a contradiction to suppose any thing, which is not infinite, to be capable of reduction, without arriving at last to a point when it shall cease to be. And from the effects of amputation, it undeniably follows, that the animal powers must depend for their existence on the modification of that body, of which they are powers, and on the continuance of which they stand or fall.

As no two parts of any animal, can both survive their separation from each other, there must be some immoveable seat of personality; but wherein this personality consists, or how far amputation may extend without approaching its recess, is a point which I confess myself unable to determine. It may be, and most probably is, very different in different species of animal beings; and what would terminate the existence of one, would permit another to survive its loss. But what is reduced by amputation, must be totally annihilated by the final separation of all its parts, beyond which nothing purely *animal* can survive.*

* How far an injury may be sustained without dis-

A final argument for the soul's immateriality may be thus stated :—Every action necessarily supposes the pre existence of the actor. And if the soul of man be material, matter must have existed previous to that consciousness, which is dependant upon the modification of it ; and the conclusion is certain,—that consciousness cannot be an essential property of it. And no adventitious acquisition of quality, can communicate a volition, of which both acquisition and quality are naturally destitute ; nor incorporate with the identity of a substance, which is of itself inert, and therefore incongruous to its nature. And if so, there must be an IMMATERIAL PRINCIPLE IN MAN.

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solving the union between *soul* and *body*, it is hard to say. The violence which in some cases can be survived, and the slight occasions which in others prove mortal, and dissolve this compact, imperiously force this truth upon the mind, that we know not with certainty in what this union consists, nor upon what secret ties it depends. The attenuated fibres, if such they are, which hold *vitality* and *inertness* together, are too minute for discovery, and lodged in those secret recesses which anatomical penetration can never reach. Certain it is, that the union must be indissoluble while life continues ; and therefore, the soul cannot have an immediate connexion with those floating particles of flesh and blood, which are thrown off by effluvia and respiration, and supplied by nutrition. We are, therefore, naturally carried to some *stamen* of personality, which cannot be exposed, either to fluctuation or decay : in this seat of personality, it is more probable, that the identity of man consists. To this permanent principle, we may conceive the immaterial spirit to be united in our present state ; and though separated from it by death, restored again to this union in the resurrection, which it will preserve to all eternity.

Admitting this permanent principle to exist, "in what the identity of the body consists," will remain

no longer an undecided question; it must consist in the *immoveable stamen* of *personality*, which is equally removed from mutation and decay.

The permanency of this principle of identity, will, no doubt, preclude it from incorporating with other bodies, and losing its own identity in the identity of another. The floating particles of flesh and blood, which form the general mass, and which occasionally adhere to this principle, have, perhaps, but little or no connexion with the identity of man. Rendered indissoluble in itself by the power of the Almighty, it may continue incorruptible during its repose in the grave; while the floating particles of the body, may be scattered with the winds of heaven. But when the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed, then this *stamen of identity*, which was sown in weakness, shall be raised in power; and what was sown a *natural*, shall be raised a *spiritual body*; and, restored to an union with its immortal partner, it shall be for ever removed from separation or change. God, however, giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed its own body —But the resurrection is not my present subject.

There are, perhaps, but few cases, in which this theory can derive more evidence from fact and incident, than in those of suspended animation; for although in these cases, a torpor has overspread the general mass, yet this permanent principle must preserve its union with the spirit The external obstructions, which occasion a suspension of animation, may oppress those springs of action, that are necessary to animate the remoter parts of the corporeal mass; and, retarded in their operations, a general languor may prevail; but the internal union between the two natures cannot be dissolved, while animation is within the reach of restoration; and I conceive that it is an internal separation between these two natures which can alone occasion certain death.

PART II.

ILLUSTRATION OF THE
IMMORTALITY OF THE HUMAN SOUL.

CHAPTER I.

THE NATURE, MODES, AND POSSIBILITY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF THE SOUL, CONSIDERED.

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SECTION I.

Death.....Definition of it.

IN the unbounded empire of human language, there is, perhaps, no term to which such strange and preposterous ideas have been annexed, as to that of Death.

The *Orientals* have spiritualized it into an angel, the *Moralists* have degraded it into a *monster*, the *Rhetorician's art* has subjoined to it the idea of personification; while the *poet's imagination* has lent *him* "his meagre aspect, and his naked bones." All these ideas are, however, but the creatures of a prolific fancy, utterly devoid of any real existence in nature, and totally unfounded in fact.

To strike the passions, and animate the feelings, sentiments like these are undoubtedly judicious and appropriate; but it is the province of philosophical disquisition, to disrobe realities of the trappings of fancy, and to present them to the world, in the genu-

ine features of their native forms. While the embellishments of fancy are thus added to a mere abstraction of the mind, the inquirer is too apt to be misled in his investigations. Hence—

> " *Death* and his image rising in the brain,
> " Bear faint resemblance, never are alike ;
> " Fear shakes the pencil, Fancy loves excess,
> " Dark Ignorance is lavish of her shades,
> " And these the formidable picture draw."

But setting aside these things, as the creatures of a warm imagination, let us inquire what is Death?

It is certain, that death must either have a *positive* or a *relative* existence. If the former, death must exist whether any thing die or not ; but this is absolutely impossible, for it supposes death, while it supposes nothing to die. If nothing were capable of dissolution or decay, it would be contradictory to admit any idea of death. It is the decay and dissolution of Beings, which give rise to the idea of death ; and therefore death can have no positive existence. If, then, death can have no positive existence, it can only exist in relation to those Beings, who are capable of undergoing *dissolution*, *privation*, or *annihilation ;* and therefore, in these *relations* it is, that we must look for every conception we have of death.

The most simple notion (if notion it may be termed) which we can form of death, is,—that it is the reverse of life; and that it deprives of animation, that subject which falls beneath its power. When death is occasioned by *dissolution*, I understand it to be a separation of those parts or properties of any Being, which are necessarily united, in order to the existence and identity of that Being. By *privation*, I mean the subtracting something from any Being, without which, that Being cannot subsist. And by *annihilation*, I mean, not only the destruction of any and

every mdification which it might have assumed, but the utter destruction of *all Being;* and the reduction of any substance to an *absolute nonentity.* If, therefore, the soul, which is an immaterial substance, perish, it must be in one of these three ways.

SECTION II.

The Soul cannot perish by Dissolution, Privation, or Annihilation.

IF the soul perishes through *dissolution*, it must be by having those parts disunited, of which it is composed. But this cannot possibly be; because the soul is not an assemblage of distinct substances, but, as has been already proved, a simple, uncompounded, substance; and therefore has no parts to be dissolved.—To suppose any substance capable of being dissolved, which has no parts, is a contradiction—it supposes a separation of parts, in a Being which has no parts to be separated.

A Being, which has no parts included in the abstract idea of its existence, can never have any thing taken from it; and where nothing can be taken away, that Being must necessarily be incapable of *dissolution.* An *exclusion* of all *parts*, is necessary to the existence of an immaterial substance; and to suppose a Being to be dissolved, from the very nature of whose existence a capacity of dissolution is necessarily excluded, is a flat contradiction;—it is supposing a Being to be capable, and yet incapable of dissolution, at the same time.

Whatever has parts, cannot be immaterial; and what has no parts, can never lose them. To suppose an immaterial substance to have parts, destroys its immateriality; for it is a contradiction to suppose *that* to be immaterial, which by its parts is demonstrated

to be otherwise; and if the soul be immaterial, which has been already proved, it necessarily follows, that it cannot perish by *dissolution*.

Neither can it be conceived, that the soul can perish by *privation*. For if privation imply the subtracting something from a substance, which is necessary to the existence of that substance, without annihilating the substance itself, (in which sense I here use it) it is certain, that whatever substance undergoes privation, must be a subject capable of it; and whatever is capable of privation, must be capable of surviving the loss of *that* which privation takes away. I therefore in this place consider *privation* as distinct from *annihilation*, the former implying the loss of something which is necessary to the being of any substance, and the latter implying the total nonentity of the substance itself. If, therefore, the soul perish by privation, the soul itself must have something included within its nature which it can lose, without the total annihilation of its Being. For where the substance itself is reduced to a perfect nonentity, it cannot be said to be thus reduced by privation, but by annihilation, which is not the subject under immediate consideration.

To suppose a privation possible, which takes nothing away from that subject to which it applies, will certainly involve a contradiction; and to suppose a privation which leaves nothing behind, will conduct the mind to the same conclusion. For if a privation can exist, which leaves nothing behind, and which takes nothing away, the substance itself which is supposed to undergo this privation, must remain uninjured and entire: and from the permament state of the substance, we shall be obliged to reduce that very privation to a nonentity, which we had previously admitted to exist and act. And a privation which cannot change the substance which is supposed to suffer by it, must be a privation, and not a privation at the same time.

That a privation, when applied to compounded bodies, may reduce to a nonentity that *cohesion* of parts, which it takes away, I readily admit; yet the substance itself from which the parts are taken, and between which cohesion is destroyed, must remain in existence and survive its loss. It is true, the modification of being in this substance, may, and must be considerably changed; but this alteration in the modes of being, cannot effect the identity of Being itself. A substance, and modification of that substance, are two distinct things. The peculiar modification of Being may be destroyed, while the substance remains, but where the substance is destroyed, the modification which depended upon the substance for its existence, must necessarily perish with it.

As privation must, therefore, imply a separation in the component parts of that Being which undergoes it, so it must also imply a change in the state of that Being which suffers by its influence, which change in the state of Being must arise from the separation of its component parts. For to admit a privation to take place, while we exclude all change from that Being which suffers, as it leaves the Being unchanged and entire, it is certain that nothing can possibly perish by it, and we must in this case allow privation to exist, while we are under the necessity of denying its existence. I therefore conclude, that wherever privation takes place, it must necessarily imply a change.

If, then, privation imply subduction, without destroying the entity of that substance in which this subduction takes place; and at the same time implies a change in the internal state of that Being which suffers; it must certainly follow,—that *privation* can only apply to Beings which are capable of separation and change; and therefore, from the pure simplicity of its nature, the soul can never perish by its influence.

If the soul perish by privation, and privation imply a partial subduction of Being, the soul must suffer loss without losing its entity, but this, on a more minute survey, will be found impossible.

That the soul is a simple immaterial substance, has been already proved, and from the simplicity of its nature, it can have nothing but its entity to lose; and to imagine the soul to perish by privation, while privation implies a *partial* subduction, and while the soul has nothing but its entity which it can possibly lose, we must suppose the soul either to remain in existence after its entity is destroyed, or to perish by privation while its entity remains entire. But as both sides present us with palpable contradictions, it clearly follows that the privation can never destroy the soul.

The manifestation of consciousness and perception, are but actions of the soul; and to suppose that privation can destroy an action, is a quibbling absurdity. An action cannot be destroyed previous to its existence; and the very instant it exists, its end being answered, it expires. And as actions are only relative, perishing emanations of a simple substance, no privation can possibly pass upon either. The substance of the soul forms but one simple idea; and to make a partial subduction from a simple idea, and yet to suppose that the part which *remains* may survive such subduction, is a contradiction—it is supposing the existence of that, which by the supposition itself, can have none:—It supposes an idea of that which is not an idea; which is an idea, and not an idea, at the same time.

As privation implies a change, there are other reasons which preclude its application to the soul. Whatever changes, must be capable of being changed; and what is capable of being changed, cannot be a simple uncompounded substance. To change the same numerical particles, for the same numerical

particles, in material bodies, is not a change, but a nonentity. And to admit, that a change has passed upon an immaterial substance, when it remains the same after this supposed change, that it was before, is an evident contradiction. If the soul be changed, it must be changed from itself to itself, which includes this contradiction,—that it has changed, and not changed, at the same time. And if no change take place in the soul by privation, it must remain the same after this privation, that it was previous to it; and this will lead us to this conclusion—that the soul *has* suffered a privation, and yet *has not* suffered it, at the same time. A Being, which has nothing but its entity to lose, cannot survive privation; and that which cannot survive privation, cannot be a subject of it.

It is a privation of animation, which all animal bodies undergo, in natural death. What remains is a lifeless mass; and the change which it undergoes, is from action to inaction. But this presents to the mind the idea of a Being capable of such a change:—Yet after this change has passed upon the human body, it is no longer a subject of death. It would be preposterous to speak of a dead man's dying, or to suppose that a dead man were capable of undergoing death, when he was known to be dead before. It would not be less contradictory, to imagine a dead man to be alive,—it is imagining the man to be dead, and not dead, at the same time.—It is no longer capable of death; the only privation in which death consists, has already passed upon it, and it has nothing more to lose.

The only entity which can now remain, is that of its component parts. A separation of these may succeed to this privation, but this can only annihilate their mutual contact; but in no case affect the entity of those component parts themselves. When the greatest possible separation has taken place through

corruption, it is still the same in point of entity that it was before; only it now engrosses different portions in the abyss of space. Every particle possesses all the essential properties which the whole did, prior to this total separation, only they are now differently modified. Matter can never be separated from itself; it is a contradiction to suppose it; it supposes the existence of it, after it supposes it destroyed. And if a material substance, after having been separated from an immaterial nature, with which it had no physical connexion, be incapable of undergoing any further loss; by the same mode of reasoning, the immaterial principle, now separated from its grosser companion, has nothing more to lose. As it implies a contradiction, to suppose matter to be separated from itself; so it implies the same contradiction, to suppose an immaterial substance to be capable of being separated, when it has nothing but itself to be separated from. To suppose an immaterial substance to be deprived of itself, is to suppose it to exist after it is destroyed.

A change can only take place in compounded bodies; whatever is formed of one simple indivisible nature only, can be separated from nothing but those properties which are essential to that nature. And to suppose a separation in those properties, is to suppose that those properties are essential to the existence of the soul, and not essential at the same time.

It may, perhaps, be objected to this mode of reasoning—"that if the body be capable of undergoing "a separation of all its parts, and thereby cease to be "a body; the immaterial substance may undergo a "similar change, and thereby cease to be a soul." On this I would observe, that I conceive the objection is founded upon a gross mistake. It is not founded upon the *nature* of substances, but upon the *combination* of them. The comparison is not fairly stated. The body is a combination of atoms; the soul is but a simple essence.

To state this case fairly, let us suppose (what, however, must be admitted to be an impossible case, because matter is capable of endless divisibility) a portion of matter to be divided, till it is impossible that it can be divided any more: I then ask,—Can either of these *particles* of matter undergo any further division or not? If it can, it is not yet divided, as in the case supposed; if it cannot, we have here a case in point. The soul is this *immaterial atom*, (if I may so speak) which is incapable of either division or change; because it is divested of all *diversity*, and lost in *unity*:—And if so, it can neither lose by privation, nor undergo a change. Or if we must still retain the idea of corporeity: let us suppose that there are as many distinct independent substances in the soul, as there are atoms in the body, capable of divisibility; in this case the comparison will hold good, and the conclusions will be fair; each may be separated to infinity, and yet each preserve its entity uninterrupted, independent and entire; and, therefore, the soul cannot perish through privation.

It now remains to be considered, whether the soul can perish by *annihilation*. If it can, all rational proof of its immortality must be given up; if not, its immortality will be ascertained.

It has been already proved, that the soul cannot perish by *dissolution*, because it has nothing to be dissolved. And it has also been proved, that it cannot perish by *privation*, because it has nothing to lose, and because it can undergo no change; and if it perish by *annihilation*, it must be either *through the tendency of its own nature*, or *the application of external force*. If an immaterial substance has no parts—has nothing to lose, and cannot change, it must follow, that such a substance cannot perish *through the tendency of its own nature*. To suppose a natural tendency, (in any simple Being) to that which is hostile to its own existence, is a contradiction. A Being

which cannot change, can have no tendencies, but such as are peculiar to its nature; and that its natural tendency is to life, is demonstrated by its actual existence. If, then, a natural change in tendency, imply a change in that nature which produced it, and no such change in nature can possibly take place in the soul, because of the simplicity of its existence; it must follow, that the soul cannot perish through the tendency of its own nature.

A Being which has no parts cannot change; and that which cannot change, must be the same to-day, that it was yesterday; and that which is the same now, that it was then, can be no farther removed from annihilation to-day, than it will be to-morrow. And to suppose a Being, with a natural tendency to annihilation, which can make no approaches towards it; is to suppose it to have a tendency to annihilation, and yet to have no such tendency, at the same time. A Being which is no nearer to annihilation to-day, than it was yesterday, and which, for the same reason, must be as far removed from it to-day, as it will be to-morrow, must always be at an equal distance from it; and that which is always at an equal distance from any given point, can never arrive at it.

If the soul tend to annihilation, it must tend to its own *contrariety;* and that which tends to its own contrariety, must act in opposition to itself, which is a contradiction. An action produced by any Being, supposes in that Being a capacity for such an action. But if an action be produced by any Being, which its nature is *incapable* of producing, we must behold in such a Being, a capacity, and an incapacity, at the same time, for such an action.

It may, indeed, be said—"that this tendency of "its nature, was impressed upon it at its primary "creation;—that it invariably accompanies the soul "in all its progresses through existence; and that its "final annihilation is nothing but the necessary result

"of things." This, however, leaves the question in much the same state that it was before—clogged with absurdities, and embarrassed with contradictions.

If the Almighty God, in the primary formation of things, have created a simple, uncompounded substance, it can have but *one* physical tendency. The moment we admit a Being tending to its own annihilation, that very moment we admit the *diversity* of its component *parts*. If we admit the unity of any Being, it is a contradiction to suppose it to have a tendency in opposition to itself. That the soul has a tendency to life, is evident from its own existence. And if it have a tendency to its own annihilation, it must tend to life, and not tend to life, at the same instant; or, it must have a tendency to annihilation, and yet have no such tendency, in the same moment. In either case, the contradiction is equal, and therefore no such tendency can possibly exist in the soul.

If a principle of life have a tendency to its own extinction, it must, in the instant of its annihilation, exist, and yet not exist, in the same moment. That which is annihilated, cannot be in existence; and that which is in existence, cannot be annihilated. Either the soul must exist in the moment of its annihilation, or it must not. If it exist, it cannot be annihilated while that existence continues; if it do not exist, it can never perish through the tendency of its own nature. And if the substance on which this tendency depends, be not in existence at the time of its annihilation, instead of annihilation being produced through the natural tendency of the soul, we are obliged to suppose the soul to be annihilated previous to its annihilation. Thus either case includes a naked contradiction, and the undeniable result is,—that an immaterial, uncompounded substance, cannot perish through the tendency of its own nature.

As the soul cannot perish through the tendency of its own nature, the next consideration is—Whether it

can perish or not, from *the application of external force?* All external force must be either natural, or supernatural; and the means through which this external force must be applied, must be either *material*, or *immaterial.*

It has been already proved, that material bodies can never act but when they bring their surfaces into contact with one another. As an immaterial substance has no surface, it is a contradiction to suppose, that matter can ever be brought into contact with it: to suppose such a contact possible, is to suppose a surface in an immaterial Being, which, at the same time, is supposed to exist without it.

Whatever has an exterior, must have an interior; and what has both, must necessarily be extended; and what is extended, cannot be immaterial. An immaterial substance, therefore, can have no surface; and what has no surface, can never be brought into contact with that which has. The very supposition includes this contradiction—that there is a contact, and no contact, at the same time. It therefore follows, that the soul must be inaccessible to all violence from matter, and that it can never perish through its instrumentality.

If matter can only act through the medium of matter, and an immaterial substance can be supposed to perish by it; matter must either act where it is not, or extend itself beyond its own being; but in admitting either, the mind is conducted to a contradiction. For when any portion of matter extends itself to an immaterial nature, it can no longer be removed from it; and that which is not removed from an immaterial nature, cannot be material. And to suppose matter to be thus extended, is to suppose it to be matter, and not matter, at the same time. Nor can any accession of power overcome the contradiction. No acquisition of power can alter the identity of its nature, without destroying its identity; or communicate to it

a force, of which its nature is incapable; the supposition includes not only a *moral*, but an *absolute* impossibility.

To make a *river fly*, to make a *rock walk*, or to make a *tree to speak*, are all impossibilities to us; but they are but *moral*. It is not impossible to conceive, that Omnipotence can add *wings* to the former, *motion* to the next, and *speech* to the latter; but to conceive, that even Omnipotence itself, can make a river *fly*, and *not fly*, at the same time; that a rock should *move*, and *not move*; or that a tree should *speak*, and yet *not speak*, in the same instant, is utterly impossible.

In like manner we can conceive that an accession of power, can make matter accomplish every thing which is placed within the reach of its nature; but to suppose matter to extend its influence beyond the limits of its own existence, or to act where it is not, is to suppose its presence and absence at the same time. And to suppose it to annihilate a nature with which it has no physical connexion, is to suppose it to act where it can have no influence; or that it can act, and not act, at the same time; which every one must see, is not only a moral, but an absolute impossibility. It therefore follows, that the soul cannot perish by the instrumentality of matter, whatever influence be attributed to the propelling power.

SECTION III.

We can have no simple Idea of what has no Existence—We have an Idea of the Existence of God, and of his Immortality—The Immortality of the Soul is inferred from its Desire of Happiness.

IF all our ideas arise from sensation and reflection, which is now no longer controverted; it is certain,

that the *materials* upon which these ideas are founded, must have existed antecedent to the ideas themselves, which are evidently founded upon those materials. It therefore follows, that we can have no simple idea of what has no existence; because he that has an idea of that which has no existence, must have an idea of *nothing*, which is a contradiction. If, therefore, we have an idea of God, it plainly follows, that a God must be in existence. Nor can the imperfection of our simple idea of God, be admitted as an objection against the truth of the proposition. For the imperfection of our idea of God, does not arise from the *uncertainty* or *nonentity* of his Being; but from the inadequacy of our faculties to comprehend, what, from its own nature, must necessarily be incomprehensible. And whatever notions we have of any thing which includes infinity, they must thus be necessarily imperfect, in an exact proportion to the relation which *finite* bears to *infinite*.

That our notion of God, and all his attributes are but simple perceptions of the mind, may thus be certified with precision. Whatever is but a simple perception of the mind, we can subtract nothing from, without annihilating the idea from whence we thus subtract. Such is the case with respect to God, and all his attributes. Whereas, in compounded bodies, by subtracting certain portions, we only alter their numerical parts, and change their specific quantity, while the identity of their *Being* remains entire.

Among the essential attributes of God, we must include his *immortality*; it being as impossible to conceive God to exist, abstracted from immortality, as it is to conceive him to exist, abstracted from *Omnipotency*, or *Holiness*. For that which is not *necessarily* immortal, cannot be God. Here, then, we have a clear and distinct idea of immortality, al-

though we are totally unable to comprehend, or grasp it in its fullest extent.

Having thus, distinct notions of the certainty of immortality, and of the existence of the human soul; the next stage in the present argument, is, to trace out those intermediate ideas, which are necessary to connect these two simple perceptions together;—*the unquenchable desire which every man feels after happiness*, appears to me most likely to form this connexion.

Wherever moral evil has not transmitted *hope* into *despair**, from a consciousness of future punishment, there is in every human mind, an insatiable desire after the greatest degree of *possible happiness*, which certainly includes the idea of immortality. And it may justify our inquiries, on principles superior to those of curiosity and idle speculation, to know on what this desire is founded? And whether it be *natural*, or *unnatural*, to the mind of man?

It is very certain, that no man can desire any thing which he is conscious will produce him no felicity.—The suposition is refuted by the very term itself. And therefore, as our desire of immortality, arises in proportion to the expansion of our faculties, and our love of *holiness* and *virtue*; it is certain, that these desires must be founded upon a perception of some real or fancied excellency, which we conceive to be included in the idea of immortality; and that if it were added to our natures, our felicity would be increased by the acquisition. This desire, therefore, must either be *rational*, or *irrational*,—must be *natural*, or *unnatural*, to the human mind.

* The same modes of reasoning which can deduce immortality from hope, can gather it from despair. The same physical principle is alike active at the bottom; and it is moral evil, by annihilating hope, that unlocks the avenues of despair.

A desire, which is unnatural, is a monster, and cannot uniformly conceal its deformity ; and never can be consistent with holiness and virtue. But a desire of immortality, instead of being inconsistent with holiness and virtue, derives its chiefest energy from the influence which these principles have upon the mind which they inhabit. It therefore follows, that this desire cannot be unnatural to the human mind. A desire which is unnatural, must be irrational ; and that desire which is at once unnatural and irrational, can never associate with holiness and virtue. For if we can suppose, that a desire, which is unnatural and irrational, can associate with holiness and virtue ; holiness and virtue must be unnatural and irrational ; or all distinctions between vice and virtue are at once done away. But as a distinction between vice and virtue must eternally exist ;—as holiness and virtue can neither be unnatural or irrational ; and as the desire of immortality, derives its chiefest energy from the influence which holiness and virtue have upon us ; it follows, that the desire of immortality can neither be irrational nor unnatural to the mind of man.

Have both reason and nature, then, conspired to cheat us with a lie? Is it possible that nature can suggest a desire which is unnatural? Or is it possible, that reason can beget within us, a desire, which she declares to be irrational? To suppose either, is to admit a palpable contradiction. If nature suggest to us the idea of our own immortality; if man be not immortal, she must suggest what is unnatural, and thus act in contradiction to herself; for we are reduced to this conclusion, to admit the desire of immortality to be *natural*, and *unnatural*, at the same time; the impossibility of which, requires no argument to disprove, and but little phylosophy to discover. And if reason beget within us, a desire which is unreasonable, we must derive

from reason, what from its own nature it is incapable of producing.—An unreasonable desire, resulting from reason, is a contradiction in terms; and therefore I conclude, that the certainty of immortality, arises from those desires which we feel for its possession.

SECTION IV.

The Annihilation of the Soul cannot be occasioned by a finite Being—The possibility of Annihilation is doubtful—This may be illustrated by reflecting on the Creation.

IT is certain, that no created Being can be infinite; the supposition refutes itself. And if no created Being can be infinite, no created Being can perform an action, which nothing less than an infinite power can accomplish. The distance between *Being*, and *not Being*, is, and must be, infinite; and that distance which is infinite, no finite power can possibly grasp; and what no finite power can grasp, must, (if it be grasped) be grasped by that which is infinite, for nothing less than an infinite power, can make an infinite exertion. And as nothing but an infinite exertion can change that which *is*, to that which *is not*; so that which cannot be changed from something to nothing, cannot be annihilated by any created Being; and that which cannot be annihilated, must thus far be immortal.

Nor can we conceive, that an infinite power can be communi cated to any finite Being; for a finite Being who can perform an infinite action, must be finite, and infinite, at the same time. And even to suppose a finite Being, to be delegated with power to perform an action, which no finite Being can accomplish; is to suppose it to be empowered to do

what it cannot do—it is to raise a finite Being into infinity, and yet to suppose it to be but finite still.

A Being thus empowered, must be either *finite* or *infinite.* If finite, it can do nothing beyond a finite nature; if infinite, it is no longer a finite Being; and from either case it follows, that the soul cannot be annihilated by any created Being, whether it be possessed of an intelligent, or an unintelligent nature.

Whether annihilation be *possible in the nature of things*, is with me a matter of considerable doubt. That it is to me utterly inconceivable, I feel no hesitation in asserting; and while I can have no *conception* of the *possibility* of annihilation, I can have no *reason* to suppose it possible.*

* I think it not necessary in this place, to inform the reader, that while I assert annihilation to be impossible, I would by no means insinuate, that annihilation is not within the reach of Omnipotent power. The infinitely powerful and ever blessed God, must have an infinite variety of ways in which he can exert his power, that are to us totally unknown, and will probably remain so through all eternity. It is true, we cannot conceive how annihilation can be accomplished; but this is no argument against fact.

The same power which created the laws of nature, can undoubtedly destroy them; but when we admit the destruction of those laws, a scene presents itself to our astonished views, which human penetration cannot enter; a scene in which we discover but little more, than "the "war of elements, the wreck of matter, and the crush of "worlds."

By what antecedent laws, the laws of nature were created, we may venture conjecture; but, with certainty, we, perhaps, shall never know. It appears probable, that the laws of nature arose from the unchangeable perfections of the Divine mind, and are but a transcript of the essential perfections of the nature of God. If this conjecture be right, the final destruction of things, as it cannot affect

If annihilation be a total extinction of all Being, something must be reduced to *nothing*. But if the reduction of something to nothing, be necessary to the very admission of annihilation; (which must be admitted) we ascertain the existence of a point that denominates a *nonentity*. And to ascertain the certainty of what is admitted to have no kind of existence, supposes *nothing* itself to be *identified*, which is a contradiction.

If, on the other side, we suppose, that the certainty of annihilation cannot be ascertained, it is impossible to say whether the soul can ever be reduced to it or not; and if the soul be not thus reduced, it cannot be in a state of annihilation. Annihilation is, therefore, inconceivable.

If the soul cannot be reduced or resolved into *perfect nothing*, annihilation is not only inconceivable, but *utterly impossible*; because annihilation is an exchange of *entity* for *nonentity*. And if this point of *nonentity*, cannot be ascertained with as much precision as *entity* itself, it is impossible to say where the former begins, or where the latter ends. But in supposing this strange point to be ascertained, where *entity* ends, and where *nonentity begins*; (which must be admitted, if annihilation be supposed possible) we give a beginning to what we admit to have no kind of possible existence, which is a flat contradiction in terms.

the immutability of God, cannot bring the soul nearer to annihilation, than if we suppose the laws of nature to continue for ever. But as this is only conjecture, it would be imprudent to pursue it within the limits of a solitary note.

All that I contend for, is....that according to the present laws of nature, and our means of knowing them, annihilation must be impossible. But when these laws are done away, an impenetrable cloud extends its shadow over us, and all beyond it is perfectly unknown.

To suppose a *nonentity* to have *no* beginning, is to suppose an *entity* to have no end; and what has no end, instead of being annihilated, must be immortal.

To give, therefore, a beginning to *nonentity*, is a contradiction in terms; and to deprive it of it, is to make the soul immortal. Annihilation is, therefore, impossible in the nature of things.

To reduce entity to nonentity, is to reduce that which *is*, to that which is *not*; it is to make *entity* and *nonentity* meet together, and entity and nonentity can then be extremes no longer. But if the physical distance which is between all natural extremes, be done away, entity and nonentity must be the same thing; for that which is separated by nothing, must necessarily be the same. And if that which is, can be the same with that which is not, we are brought to this naked contradiction—that the soul may be annihilated, and not annihilated at the same time.

Whatever is perfectly annihilated, can have no kind of existence; and what has no kind of existence, we can form no kind of conception of; and what we can form no kind of conception of, cannot possibly be known. To ascertain the soul's annihilation, is therefore utterly impossible.

To this it may, perhaps, be objected, "that al- "though the soul's annihilation cannot be ascertained, "it may, nevertheless, be possible, as the possibility "of a fact by no means depends on our knowledge "of that fact for its existence." To admit any supposed fact to be possible, while we can form no *possible* conception of such a *possibility*, is to lay the foundation of our reasoning in the sand; and to build on such a foundation, is to raise a fabric on what has no existence.

In every mental exertion, the mind must take its flight from some admitted point—there must be some *data* from whence we start. And if the mind can

trace an association of ideas, between this given point, and the object it designs to compass, the demonstration will be complete. But if we have no *data*, from whence we commence our mental operations, it is impossible that ever the perception of the soul can arrive at its fancied object:—we can have no foundation on which to build, in order to approach it. Such is the case before us. The annihilation of the soul is to be made out; to do this, proof must be adduced; this proof cannot be obtained. The objection, then, has recourse to probability; probability deserts it also:—The last refuge, then, is, "that the case is possible." And on this I presume to say, that if the annihilation of the soul be supposed to be possible, either this possibility must be self-evident, or supported by unquestionable authority; without this we can have no *data* from whence we may presume.

As to authority, it cannot furnish the least pretence. And to admit the possibility of what we cannot conceive to be possible, is a contradiction in terms; it is supposing a thing to be possible, and yet not supposing it possible, at the same time: it is taking for granted, the very point which remains to be proved;—and the mind, being thus deprived of its resting place, can never move onward in progressive reasonings, to identify that possibility which the objection assumes as an admitted point. And to urge as a possibility, what we can have no conception of the existence of; is to admit that as a possibility, which we cannot even conceive to be possible.

An idea of the possibility of annihilation, supposes that *possibility* perceivable: but to suppose it possible that the soul can be annihilated, while we can have no *possible* conception of such a *possibility*, is to admit, and yet to deny the existence of such a *possibility*, at the same instant.

In admitting any fact to be possible, there must be some evidence to support the mind in that belief.—But to admit a fact to be possible, while we have no kind of evidence to sustain our minds in what we admit; is not only to give ourselves up to the caprice of blind credulity, but to argue from no evidence, and to decide without any proof. And to found the soul's annihilation on a mere abstract possibility, of which the mind can avowedly form no conception; is to admit as a fact, what we do not know to be so; and to avow that we *know* annihilation to be possible, while we disclaim all *knowledge* of it at the same time.

But even admitting the *naked, abstract possibility* of the fact, that the soul can be annihilated, yet the abstract possibility of what *may be*, must necessarily be to us inconceivable; for the instant we can have a conception of any *possibility*, it is a possibility in the *abstract* no longer. A possibility must be conceivable to us, or it must not. If it be conceivable, we must trace it by some relation, and then it cannot be in the abstract; but if it be not conceivable, the mere abstract possibility, is a possibility to us no more. For to conceive the existence of a possibility, which is to us inconceivable, is to conceive a possibility which we cannot conceive; and is a contradiction in terms.

To admit the future existence of what may be, is to admit the *present* existence of its *possibility*; and if the existence of this possibility be in the *abstract*, it must be detached from all evidence of its existence; without this, it cannot be in the *abstract*. But to admit the present existence of a possibility, which has no evidence to support the mind in the perception of that *possible* existence; is to reason without all reason, which is an absurdity too gross either to be adopted or refuted.

Of that which we have no knowledge, we can have no notion; and what we have no notion of, we have no reason to believe; and, therefore, to admit that we have a notion of the existence of an *abstract possibility*, while we have neither knowledge nor notion of its existence, is to admit that we have a notion of a possibility, which we have no notion of. And if so, there can be *to us* no such thing in existence as the *abstract possibility of what may be.* All abstract possibilities must necessarily be to us unknown; and what is to us totally unknown, can neither be an object of our knowledge, reason, or belief.

That the abstract possibility of the Being of all created substances, both material and immaterial, must have existed previous to their actual existence, is a truth, which, I believe, no one will attempt to controvert or deny. Yet of this abstract possibility of things, no conception could possibly have been formed, prior to the actual existence of them. It is not my design to found the force of this argument upon the absurdity of supposing a created Being forming a conception previous to its own existence, though this assuredly must have been the case; but what I intend, is—that even admitting our own existence, no reasoning could ever have led us to form any conception of the abstract possibility of creation. It is from the actual existence of creation that we know it must have been possible prior to its actual existence; but if no such creation had ever actually existed, the abstract possibility of it would have been totally unknown.

Supposing God had permitted such a Being as man to have existed previous to the actual creation of things, I would ask—Could man, in this state, have had any notion of the possibility of creation? If not, the abstract possibility is at once rendered totally inconceivable; but if he could, it must be

either by *reason* or *intuition*. It could not have been by reason, because reason would have led to an opposite conclusion. Creation is the calling something into existence, which was not before. But how the Divine efficiency could be so acted upon by itself, as to produce something material, is what no human capacity can comprehend. To modify and combine certain properties which previously exist, may be conceived possible, from the previous existence of what is to be modified and combined; but to conceive that the Divine efficiency can be acted upon by itself, and *something* produced by that action;—that material substances can be produced without any materials; or that real Being can be made to arise out of what has no Being; instead of being a dictate of reason, is utterly incomprehensible and inconceivable.

To suppose an intuitive knowledge of its possibility to have been communicated to man, is to call in the assistance of a supernatural power; it is then no longer a conception, arising from our natural faculties, but is rather a conviction produced by authority, than the result of discernment. And, therefore, the abstract possibility of creation, must, in the case given, have been totally inconceivable to man.

When we lift our thoughts to God's *creative power*, we feel it difficult to exclude from its genuine nature, those local ideas of *generation* and *corruption*, with which, on all occasions, we are enveloped; but which must be equally injudicious and absurd. From the influence of these local prejudicies, and this erroneous association of ideas, we feel it difficult to disentangle ourselves, to form any distinct conceptions of *formation* and *creation*; though, in themselves, the two ideas are quite distinct, and have but little or no relation to one another. The former undoubtedly implies, the previous existence of those materials, which are modified by formation; and it undeniably includes a

contradiction, to suppose—that formation could ever take place, out of *pure* and *absolute nothing*. In this case, we must suppose *pure nothing* to be acted upon, as a pre-existent and material cause; and which must equally include a contradiction, whether the efficient power be supposed to reside in a finite, or infinite Being. *Formation*, therefore, is not *creation*. For while *formation* presents us with an idea, which includes the pre-existence of these materials, out of which any Being or thing is formed; *creation* presents us with an exertion of infinite power, calling into existence, what, from the term itself, could not have existed before. And the supporters of that theory, (which makes formation and creation to be terms synonymous with one another,) would do well to consider, whether it do not include a denial of a creative power in God.

When we attribute to the Great God, a creative power, it is absurd in the highest degree, to admit the pre-existence of those materials, out of which matter itself was created;—it is admitting the existence of matter, prior to the existence of matter, which is a contradiction in terms. If the materials, out of which matter itself was created, existed previously to the existence of matter, the term creation must be totally inapplicable. In this case, it is rather re-production than creation; and to find a case, to which the term creation can be applied, we must look deeper into the recesses of nature, than either of the cases under consideration can afford.

If, under these circumstances, we admit the pre-existence of those materials, out of which matter itself was created, and ask—of what peculiar nature were those materials? we shall feel ourselves rather at a loss to find an answer. To suppose them to be *material*, includes the contradiction stated above; and to suppose them to be *spiritual*, will lead us exactly to the same conclusion; we are, therefore,

under the necessity of resolving all into the *efficiency* of the Divine power.

As the term *creation*, includes within it nothing more—than the causing that to be, which was not before, the action through which it is accomplished, can involve neither an absolute impossibility nor contradiction.

That the manner how this could be accomplished, surpasses all human comprehension, (if not the comprehension of all finite intelligence) is too evident to admit a moment's doubt; but this can never be admitted as an argument against infinite power.

On the contrary, the supposition which makes matter to originate in *absolute nothing*, not only supposes the non-existence of all materials, but it annihilates also the idea of an efficient power; for where an efficient power is admitted to exist, there it is certain, that absolute nothing cannot be. If, then, we admit that God created matter, both *from* and *by* his own efficiency, though it presents us with an idea which must necessarily be inexplicable, yet it involves neither contradiction nor absurdity. And for aught we know, the Divine *efficiency* may afford the only source, out of which both *matter* and *spirit* could possibly be created.

Certain it is, that we can have no conception how any thing could be performed, unless it be by the laws of nature; and it is equally certain, that by those laws, creation could not have taken place. For if we admit, that creation was accomplished by the laws of nature, we must, in order to avoid an opposite contradiction, admit the existence of those laws antecedent to all creation; and in this case, those laws must be *uncreated*, *independent*, and *eternal*; and therefore must be God. But as all laws suppose the previous existence of a lawgiver, antecedent to their own existence, it plainly follows, that those laws can be neither uncreated, independent, nor eternal.

I therefore conclude—that as the creation of nature, could not have been accomplished by the laws of nature; and that as all human conceptions must be circumscribed by the boundaries which these laws prescribe,—the manner how creation was accomplished, must be to us necessarily incomprehensible; and will, without involving any contradiction, in all probability, remain so through eternity.

SECTION V.

Can the Soul be absorbed into the Divine Efficiency? Nonentity, and Noncreation, are not the same—All abstract Possibilities are to us unknown—The Laws of nature cannot destroy the Soul—It has no natural tendency to Death, which is the opposite of its positive Existence—Nor can the Soul approach to the Absence of itself.

WHEN, from a contemplation of what is possible by the laws of nature, we turn our thoughts from the origin of things, and inquire, whether the same Almighty power, which produced us from the fecundity of his nature, cannot retrace his own actions, and absorb all finite intelligences again into his own efficiency; the question assumes a new and totally different aspect. It is no longer, in this case, a question about the entity or nonentity of Being, but about the modification of future existence.

To unhinge creation, and resolve every thing into its pristine state, is most undoubtedly within the reach of infinite power. This, no doubt, would destroy the individuality of man: but the absorption of individuality, does not imply the annihilation of Being. What the modification of future Being may be, forms but little or no part of this essay. There is, with me, no doubt that the individuality of man,

will be preserved through all eternity; but whether the individuality of man be continued or lost, is a question which belongs to another subject.

As absolute nonentity, was not that out of which God called forth creation, so neither will absolute nonentity take place, although God were to retrace all his actions, and reduce every thing to that state of *noncreation* in which things were, antecedent to their actual Being. Those, therefore, who out of veneration to the Divine Being, ascribe to him the power of producing annihilation, do in reality ascribe to him, an effect which seems contrary to his nature; and which, therefore, his nature seems incapable of producing.—That power which produces *annihilation*, must produce a *nonentity*; and that power which produces a nonentity, produces *nothing*. I therefore conclude, that annihilation must be impossible, according to every mode of reasoning of which we are capable, and according to every view which we have of the nature of things.

If I were to be asked, whether it be possible for a *Zamiff* to exist or not? I should naturally reply, that I know not what a *Zamiff* is; and, therefore, can annex no idea to the expression; and having no conception of the thing, I cannot be guided in my decision, whether it be within the limits of possible existence or not. To decide whether a *Zamiff* be within the reach of existence, it is necessary to have some knowledge of its nature; but a knowledge of its nature, supposes the existence of that nature, (for to know what *is not*, is a contradiction) but if that nature be in existence, though but in idea, it is no longer a question of *abstract possibility*, but of choice in the Deity; and unless its nature be ascertained, it is impossible to say, whether a *Zamiff* be within the reach of *possible* existence or not, either of corporeal or incorporeal nature.* In like man-

* To the term *Zamiff*, I annex no kind of idea. It

ner, perfect annihilation is the total negation of all Being; and to form any conception of what a total negation is, is utterly inconceivable, if not totally impossible.

If ever annihilation take place, annihilation must be *now* possible, or it must not. If not, that which is possible now, must remain impossible for ever; for no power can make that, which is an impossibility now, to be a possibility hereafter:—but if we now *admit* annihilation to be possible, this very *admission* of the *possibility* of annihilation, supposes that *possibility* to be now *known*; and this *knowledge* will then identify the *certainty* of that, which, when identified must be a *nonentity*; and which, from that very circumstance, can have no kind of existence. Whatever can be identified, cannot be a *nonentity*; and that which cannot be identified, cannot be known to be possible. The admission therefore, of the *certainty* of the *mere possibility* of annihilation, must inevitably destroy the fact itself; because the fact itself is a *nonentity*, and, therefore, can never be identified; and what cannot be identified, as it can afford no kind of evidence of its certainty, can never be known to be possible. And, therefore, whichsoever side of the alternative be admitted, the human soul, in either case, from all our modes of reasoning, must necessarily be immortal.

To suppose that any created Being could be a creator, is a contradiction; and therefore, from the nature of things, creation must have been the work of an uncreated power. And to conceive that any finite

is presumed to be a something which is totally distinct in nature, both from created and uncreated existence.

A term to which no idea can be annexed, and which expresses *nothing*, either of corporeal or incorporeal Being, can never be determined by any one to be within the reach of *possible existence*. And yet it must be in such a state, that all things are supposed when we conceive they are *possible* in the *abstract* only.

intelligence can be able to form, without any evidence, an idea of the *abstract possibility* of what infinite power alone is able to effect; is to make a part to comprehend the whole, and to exist before it had a Being.

As nothing but infinite power could create matter and spirit out of no materials, so nothing but infinite power can retrace its own exertions; but to suppose that either could be effected by the laws of nature, is a plain contradiction. If creation took place by the laws of nature, the laws of nature must have existed prior to their own existence: and if annihilation take place by those laws, the laws of nature must survive their own destruction, and exist after they are destroyed. For if an immaterial substance can be destroyed by the laws of nature, every thing in nature (including the laws of nature, which form a part) can be destroyed by the same laws. But if every thing in nature can be extinguished by the laws of nature, the laws of nature must survive their own annihilation, in order to their own destruction, which is a contradiction. And if we suppose the laws of nature to perish with annihilation of any natural substance, then this substance must be annihilated by those laws, that, at the instant of its annihilation, can have no existence; which is also a contradiction.

There is, therefore, nothing to found the possibility of the soul's annihilation upon, but Omnipotent power, and this exerted in opposition to the laws of nature. And what can be accomplished only in opposition to the laws of nature, can never be conceived by any Being, which is only subject to its laws. Therefore, to suppose the annihilation of the soul possible, is to *suppose* without reason or evidence; it is to pretend to comprehend by the laws of nature, what to the laws of nature is, and must be, incomprehensible.

That life and death cannot both have a positive existence, is a self-evident proposition; the one being the pure negation of the other. Thus, if we suppose death to have any certain existence, life, which is its reverse, can be no more than the pure negation of its Being; or if life have a positive existence, then death, which is its reverse, can be no more than its absence. To suppose both life and death to have a positive existence, is to suppose that they may both exist at once; and if both may exist at once, both may meet in the same subject. But to suppose both *life* and *death* to meet in the same subject, involves in it this contradiction,—that a subject capable both of life and death, may *live*, and *not live* at the same time;—both, therefore, cannot *positively* exist. Nor is it possible that life and death can ever meet together in the same subject:—The supposition includes in it this contradiction—that life may *be*, and *not be*, in the same instant.

But while it is impossible that life and death can ever meet together, and unite in the same subject, it follows, with all the evidence of demonstration, that either life or death must positively exist. To suppose neither to exist positively, is to suppose both to be pure negations. But to suppose two negations to be the reverse of one the other, is the grossest of contradictions. Whatever is a negation, must be the negation of something which positively exists, without this, it is the negation of *nothing*. And if neither life nor death positively exist, they must each be the negation of a mere nonentity.

The *negation* of a *nonentity*, will prove the *positive* existence of that supposed *negation*; for that which is the *absence* of *nothing*, must be *something*; and that which is something, cannot be a pure physical negation. But to suppose life and death to be pure negations or the mere absence of each other, while neither is supposed to have any positive

existence; is not only to make each, less than the "shadow of a shade," but it is to place in opposition to each other, two negations, neither of which, from the nature of the case supposed, can possibly exist. It therefore follows, that either life or death must positively exist; and the next enquiry must be, Which of these exists positively, and which relatively?

If the pure negation of all Being had existed from eternity, positive Being could not now exist. That which was from eternity, must necessarily now exist; and that which thus exists, can be subject neither to decay nor change. Numerous casualties may affect a compounded nature, but life and death must ever be inaccessible to each other, and be placed beyond the influence of mutation, or natural change.

If *nothing* had existed from eternity, the immensity of space could have furnished nothing but the mere *absence* of *Being*. The mere absence of Being could never have acted; (for this would be to suppose an *action* without an *actor*, which is a contradiction) and that which could never have acted, could never have produced positive Being. But as every substance has a positive Being, it undeniably follows, that mere absence could not have existed from eternity. And if mere *inaction* could not have been from eternity, it follows also, that death can have no positive existence—that it is a mere negation, and a mere negation of that which *positively is*.

The soul is a principle of *pure essential life*, which positively exists as it stands opposed to death, which is its reverse; and under these limitations, therefore, it is, that I wish life to be considered in the present case. In the most general acceptation of life, it is but *relative*, and as such I have hitherto considered it in the former part of this Essay.

But even admitting that mere absence had been from all eternity, it would not from thence follow,

that death had a positive existence; it would, indeed, sufficiently prove the nonentity of life, and the entire negation of all substances; but such an absence of all Being would not be death. It would entirely destroy the idea of the plenitude of all Being; but while the idea of plenitude was thus destroyed, mere absence could erect nothing positive in its stead.

The mere *absence*, from whence we derive our notion of death, is not the real absence of *all Being*, but the absence of something which is essentially necessary to that *particular modification* of Being, from whence something is taken, the loss of which that particular mode of Being cannot survive, and of which this absence is exactly the reverse. All nature will furnish us with instances of these reverses, that God has placed in those extremes, which must forever remain inaccessible to one another.—Thus, cold is the absence of heat—darkness the absence of light, and insensibility the absence of sensation. And the very instant we conceive either of these extremes, to make any approaches to its reverse, that instant, by deserting its station, its real and nominal existence can be no more. If, then, inaction be the absence of all action, and quiescence the absence of all motion, death, in the most common acceptation, can be no more than the absence of life.

But when we raise our thoughts to the nature of the human soul, and consider it as a principle of pure essential life, we discover nothing which it can possibly be deprived of but its own existence. And whether we denominate that which is its perfect extreme—*Death*,—*the perfect absence of itself*,—*or the reverse of Being*; certain it is, that they are extremes which are separated from one another by those insuperable barriers which they cannot pass, and upon the preservation of which all our notions of natural extremes depend for their existence. If, then, the soul be a principle of pure essential life, in

which consciousness and activity inhere, and from whence must be subtracted every foreign appendage and superfluity, as has been already proved; and if consciousness and perception can only exist in an unextended, immaterial, and uncompounded substance; and if nothing can belong to the human soul, but what is physically necessary to its existence; and if the subtraction of any one property of the soul, be to the soul the utter loss of Being; whether we suppose the soul to approach toward the perfect nonentity of its own Being, or suppose this nonentity of Being to approach toward the soul, by annihilating the real and nominal existence of that to which either is supposed to approach, the soul must ever be inaccessible to its own *extreme*, and can never meet in contact with the *perfect absence* of itself.

Such is the nature of the human soul, the absence or reverse of which is death. And without the annihilation of this nature, it must remain in a state of incorruptibility through all eternity.

Can then, these extremes in nature ever meet together?—If they can, they are extremes no longer; if not, the soul must be inaccessible to death, and consequently immortal. If these extremes can meet together, either the soul must approach to the entire absence of itself, or that which has no positive existence, must act upon the soul. To suppose the soul to approach to the pure negation of itself, is a contradiction: it is to suppose the soul to be a principle of pure abstracted life, and yet at the same time, suppose it to be no such thing.

Whatever the soul moves towards, is proved by that very movement, to be the perfect absence of itself no more. And while we suppose that the soul approaches to the absence of itself, we are obliged to suppose that the soul is abstracted from itself,—that it leaves itself behind, and yet moves with itself, to the entire absence of itself;—that it

has access to that which must necessarily be inaccessible; and which, could the soul have access unto it, would entirely destroy that very absence which it pursued, and thereby annihilate that very death by which the soul is supposed to be extinguished. This mass of contradictions is too gross to be pursued. And the undeniable consequence is, that the soul itself cannot move towards, or ever approach the mere absence of itself.

SECTION VI.

The Soul cannot suffer Annihilation by the Action of the Absence of essential Life—Life and Death are Extremes which cannot meet in contact—Annihilation is a Nonentity which cannot be produced by any Power—There must be an infinite Distance between Nonentity and the Medium through which the supposed annihilating Power operates.

AS the soul cannot approach to the absence of itself, nor perish through any tendency which it has to its own negation, for reasons which are already assigned; it remains to be considered, whether the mere absence of pure essential life, can ever approach unto it.

If the mere absence of pure essential life be capable of approaching the soul, we must admit *mere absence* to exist, because that which has no existence can never act, and consequently can never make any approaches toward the soul. And if this mere absence be capable of acting, and this action implies previous existence in that which acts, this mere absence can no longer be the pure negation of positive Being, and is therefore not the subject under present consideration.

The mere absence of which I speak, can be no more than a pure negation; and what is but a pure negation of positive Being, must be devoid of that existence which is necessary to that activity which we attribute to it. And if the soul be approached by the entire absence of itself, and this absence have no kind of positive existence, mere absence must act without a Being, and approach the soul without having any kind of possible existence. Either this absence must be *capable* or *incapable* of approaching the soul. If *capable*, it is no longer a pure negation; and if *incapable*, it can neither approach the soul, nor act upon it. If it be not a pure negation, it is not the subject of present enquiry; but if it be, the soul can never be accessible to, and therefore can never perish by it.

And as it implies a contradiction to suppose that the absence of Being, which is the reverse of the soul, to be any thing more than a pure negation; and as to suppose a mere negation to have a positive existence, is a contradiction also; so likewise that supposition which would lead us to admit, that what has no positive Being can perform an action, must be equally contradictory and absurd. And to suppose that that which positively exists, can perish by that which neither exists nor acts, is a contradiction too monstrous to be either refuted or pursued. As the soul, therefore, cannot approach to the negation itself, nor this negation approach the soul, it necessarily follows, that the soul, being inaccessible to death, must be immortal.

But admitting that a mutual contact could take place between the soul, and that death, by which it is supposed to be destroyed, yet still there are extremes in nature, which must forever render them inaccessible to one another. In these extremes of nature, which form the insuperable barrier of things, life and death are placed at *antipodes* to each other.

It is from this natural distance which lies between them, that we form our conceptions of each; and no longer than this distance is preserved, can we attach any idea to either.

And although we admit, that a contact were to take place between these extremes, still their proximity to each other in point of space, can no way overcome that distance which God has placed between life and death, and between that entity of Being which constitutes the soul, and this nonentity through which it is supposed to be destroyed. To admit the idea of a proximity, through which a contact is supposed to take place between the soul and the entire absence of itself, is to lose sight of the idea of *absence*, which is the subject under present consideration; and is to raise mere absence into an efficient cause, and to attribute to it all that formal existence through which alone positive existence can be distinguished from the negation of Being. But as mere absence can never approach that which it is the absence of, nor destroy that positive Being upon which it depends for its own *negative nominat on*; it is certain that no contact can be formed, and consequently no proximity, if it were admitted possible, can bring the soul nearer to annihilation, than if we admit the soul to be divided from the absence of itself by a distance which would exceed the extremes of the orbit of *Saturn*. And whether any power which possesses positive Being in itself, can destroy the soul, must be the subject of our next inquiry.

It is certain, that nothing can *communicate* what it does not possess; nor *produce* what it has not the *power* of *producing*. These propositions are self-evident, and the reverse of either is a contradiction. A Being which can communicate annihilation, must be one which is in existence; for that which *is not*, can communicate nothing; and for the same reason, can produce no effects. And that Being which is in

existence, cannot, from the *certainty of its existence*, include the *absence of existence* within its nature; and consequently can never communicate to another, that *absence of existence or annihilation*, which it does not possess itself. *Annihilation*, therefore, can never be communicated, either by a Being which is *in existence*, or by one which *is not*.

As no Being can communicate to another, what it does not possess itself, so neither can it *produce*, what it has not the power of *producing*. If annihilation be the *effect* of power, which must be admitted by all who contend that power produces it; annihilation must be produced by an *energy* residing in that power, which is supposed capable of producing it. For unless an *ability* to produce annihilation, be included in the nature of power, power itself can never perform what it has not the *ability* to accomplish. But in admitting a *resident energy* in power, to produce annihilation, we make this *resident energy* to produce a *nonentity*, (for annihilation is a nonentity) and that which produces a *nonentity*, produces *nothing*. The supposition, therefore, of a power, whose *active energy* produces *nothing*, is a contradiction in terms; it attributes to the power, an *activity*, which, in the *only effect* which it is supposed to produce, we are obliged to deny the existence of; and, a power which is thus constituted, must be *active* and *not active* at the same time. If, therefore, neither the *absence*, nor *presence* of power can produce annihilation, it necessarily follows—that the human soul must be immortal.

It may, perhaps, be said—that "*annihilation* is "not, in the strictest propriety of speech, an *effect* "of *power*, but is rather that point to which, through "the effect of power, *positive Being* is reduced." Admitting, for argument's sake, the case which is here supposed, I would then ask—Can power ever

pursue an object to a point which includes the absence of all Being, and consequently the absence of all power? If it can, we must suppose *power to be*, where we suppose *power not to be*, which every one must perceive is a contradiction:—If not, annihilation must be impossible. And whether we suppose power to be *present* or *absent*, at this given point, as the former includes a contradiction, and the latter precludes the possibility of annihilation; the decisive result is—that the human soul must necessarily be immortal.

Against this mode of reasoning, I can conceive no objection more forcible than this—"that though "the *annihilating power* may be supposed to exist, "yet it does not follow, that the *substance* which is "supposed to be *annihilated*, must exist also." To this I reply—that the *point* which admits the existence of the *annihilating power*, does not preclude the existence of that substance, which is supposed to be annihilated by it. For as neither *power*, nor an *immaterial substance*, can occupy space, the *point* which admits the existence of the *former*, cannot exclude the *latter* from *Being*. If power, which is supposed to annihilate, can exist, in this point of annihilation, why should we suppose—that the same given point, should refuse existence to that substance, which is supposed to be annihilated by it? Natural causes can never annihilate *one* substance, and yet permit *another*, under the same circumstances, to exist. I therefore finally observe,—the power which is supposed to reduce the soul to a point of annihilation, *must* either *exist in this* given point, or *it must not*:—If it *exist*, we are not yet arrived to that *point*, which describes a nonentity; (and where *nonentity* is not, *annihilation* can never BE) and if it *exist not* in this given point, the soul can never be annihilated by its influence; and in either case—*the soul must be immortal.*

If the soul be annihilated, it must be either by something which is in existence, or something which is not. But that which is in existence can never produce what is physically contrary to itself; and that which has no existence, can never act.

A Being, which is in a state of positive existence, can never be annihilated while that existence continues; and a Being which is devoid of all existence, can never be a subject of it. That which is in existence, must be at an infinite distance from non-existence; and that which is not in existence, is not the subject of our inquiry. Whatever is at an *infinite* distance from any given point, can never be brought nearer to that point, through the influence, either of time, circumstance, or power; and that which is removed from the influence of time, circumstance, and power, must necessarily be immortal.

Annihilation must either be the effect of power, or it must not. If of power, power must continue to operate upon a subject, until the subject itself, through the influence of that power, be reduced to a nonentity. But in admitting power to have an active operation, until it produces a nonentity, we admit a palpable contradiction. If it be not the effect of power, we must suppose annihilation to be produced, without admitting the existence of any cause sufficiently powerful to produce it, which is a contradiction also. If, therefore annihilation cannot be produced, either with power, or without it, the soul can never be a subject of it, and what cannot be a subject of it, must be immortal. The admission of a power, which is only known to exist, because it produces a nonentity, furnishes the mind with a chaos of contradictions—because that which produces a *nonentity*, is not power, but *nothing*.

SECTION VII.

That the Absence of the Divine Power is impossible.

IT may, perhaps, be said, that the annihilation of Being is not the effect of any power; but that as all positive Being is supported in existence by infinite power, the mere cessation of that power is of itself, sufficient to produce annihilation; so that annihilation cannot be said to be the effect of any active cause, because the absence of the *cause of Being*, is alone sufficient to produce the nonentity of a finite Being.

The objection which is here started, appears to involve two distinct points. The first is, that the absence of the divine power is possible; and the second is, that the absence of this power is of itself sufficient to annihilation, without admitting the existence of any active cause to produce it. But whether the former be possible, or whether the latter be sufficient to the annihilation of Being, I must confess I have some considerable doubts; and as this objection seems plausible, I will endeavour in these sections to examine its force, and give to each part an attentive consideration.

If God be an *omnipotent* and an *omnipresent* Being, which I believe no one will deny, it is certain that no portion either of space or nature, of time or eternity, can exist where God is not. And it is equally certain, that the existence of the Divine Being cannot be *partial* any where, but must be *perfect* every where; this proposition is necessarily included in our notion of his OMNIPRESENCE. And if God be an Omnipresent Being, it is also certain that every attribute essential to his existence, must be inseparable from his Being and nature. That God, from the very notion we have of Omnipotency, must be possessed of infinite power, cannot, I believe, be

denied by any who will admit of his existence ; and as power is an essential attribute of Deity, it is certain, that its diffusiveness can be limited by nothing but the existence of God : it therefore, can neither be arbitrary, nor adventitious, since both the nature, and attributes of God, must be denominated from their *necessary existence*. The present, therefore, is not an inquiry into the nature of the moral attributes of God, but into the nature of that power which is essential to his Being, and without which, all our notions of God are at once banished from the world. For could we admit it possible, that God could withdraw from any given point, either of *space* or *nature*, of *time* or *eternity*, that power which is an essential attribute of his nature, and which from his Omnipotency must be admitted to be infinite ; we must behold in that given point, a certain *vacuum* where the divine power is not ; (because an immaterial substance is supposed to drop into annihilation through its total absence) ; and consequently, a point of duration, in which an *infinite* power is *not infinite* ; and we must admit the Being of a God, even while we subtract from his Being that infinite diffusion of his power, the presence of which is absolutely necessary to our notions of his existence. And, consequently, we must admit the existence of an Omnipotent God, while we admit a point in which his Omnipotency has no existence. To admit, therefore, the absence of the divine power to be possible, will oblige us either to admit the Being of a God, abstracted from that power which is essential to his nature ; or to admit an infinite power not to be infinite, both of which suppositions are plain and palpable contradictions.

If God could withdraw his power from any given portion, either of space or nature, of time or eternity, and yet remain infinite in his power, by the same modes of reasoning we must admit it possible, that

God could withdraw his power from other portions of space and nature also. And what has no necessary existence in one part, can have no necessary existence in any part; and what has no necessary existence in all and every part, can have no kind of necessary existence whatever, and we may thus proceed until we totally deny the Being of a God.

If God withdraw his power from the support of any Being, and that Being fall into a nonentity through its absence, it is certain, that this power cannot be so diffusive afterward as it was before, because that portion of energy which was necessary to support that Being in existence, which has perished through his absence, is now done away; and consequently we lessen the extent of that power which we admitted to be infinite, and which must, therefore, be without limits, which will conduct us to this contradiction—that infinite power is *limited* and *illimitable*, at the same time.

The supposition of the absence of an Omnipresent Being, is of itself a contradiction in terms :—And an Omnipotent power, which is capable of being withdrawn, is an absurdity equally gross; in either case, it totally denies the nature of necessary existence; and, by adopting the supposition—that the absence of the divine power is possible, we make the most essential attributes of Deity to be only arbitrary and adventitious. And what is only arbitrary and adventitious to any Being, may be totally done away, without affecting the nature of that Being to which it is thus arbitrary and adventitious; and we may thus admit the existence of God, after we have supposed his power and presence to be necessary neither in space nor nature, in time nor eternity. And as these contradictions cannot possibly be allowed in point of argument, nor rationally admitted in point of fact; it must evidently follow—that no portion, either of space or nature, of time or

eternity, can be destitute of God; and, therefore, no Being which exists within the confines of either, can possibly perish through that absence of power which is impossible.

It may, perhaps, be further asked—"Whether "that God can be infinite in his power, who has not "power to withdraw his power? If he can with-"draw it, must not annihilation be admitted? If not, "can God be Omnipotent?"—Questions like these are specious, but I conceive they are sophistical and unsound. If God have the power to withdraw his power, from supporting all nature in existence, which is presumed in the objections now before us, I would ask,—Is God present or absent in those *vacuities* from whence all finite existence is removed? If present, he must be there a God without his power; (because the absence of the divine power is supposed to constitute that vacuity on which I found the present question); and if he be absent, we at once give up his Omnipresence, and in either case destroy an essential attribute of God. In the former case, we make Omnipotence to exist without power; and in the latter, we admit the absence of an Omnipresent Being.

If God can partially withdraw his own power from his own existence, (which must be admitted by all those who admit the objection, and who do not deny his Being), I would further ask—Cannot God, on the same principle on which he can partially withdraw his power, and separate it from his own existence, totally withdraw, and finally annihilate it? The same reasonings, which suppose a partial absence of power to be included in the operation of Omnipotent power, will carry us to the total absence of it. For we may proceed onward with the same questions, until Deity itself is no more, and until we make Omnipotence to consist in the withdrawing of Omnipotence; and we must thus suppose Omnipo-

nt power to remain after it is removed, all of which re palpable contradictions.

As then, from the nature and attributes of God, l space and nature, all time and eternity, must be ll of God; and as the certainty of the Divine eing must be denominated from his necessary ex- tence; and as to suppose the reverse of either is contradiction; it must inevitably follow, that if e soul perish through the absence of the divine wer, it must perish where the boundaries of space, nature, of time, and of eternity can never reach, d, consequently, where that power which we admit be infinite, cannot possibly extend. And as space d nature, time and eternity, bound all our concep- ns of possible existence; and as these limits can- t possibly admit the absence of the divine power; d as all possible existence must be confined within ese limits (if such be); I conclude, that the ab- nce of the divine power must be totally impossible, cording to all those modes of reasoning and means knowledge which God has placed within the reach human comprehension.

It will, perhaps, be said—"That if we admit the bsence of the divine power to be impossible, it will not only militate against the creative power of God, but will tend to prove all things to be eternal." Although such an objection may seem plausible, I nceive it is certainly founded upon an erroneous ea of creation. If the noneternity of matter did ply the nonexistence of the divine power, I would only admit the plausibility of such an objection, would admit it as unanswerable; but this, how- r, I conceive is not the case. If the divine power l not existed from eternity, it is certain that cre- on could not have taken place through its efficacy. at the efficient cause of creation did exist from nity, I not only admit, but think I can easily ve. But if the absence of all power be admitted

possible, and the nonentity of Being be supposed to result from that absence, the efficient power must be removed. And if the efficient power be supposed to be entirely removed from any substance which is supposed to be reduced to a nonentity through its absence, I would ask—Is the *re-creation* of that substance possible to the divine power, or not? If possible, the divine power must operate where it is not because the absence of this power is that which is supposed to have produced annihilation; but in admitting any power to operate where it is not, we shall be obliged to admit its presence and absence at the same time. But if the recreation of this substance is not within the reach of the divine power it is certain that the nonentity of Being can bear no relation to the state of things antecedent to creation.

Our ideas of *sooner* and *later*, are all local and relative, and can have no kind of relation to God.—Creation could not have taken place sooner than it did. God, who created time, must have created it in eternity; and what took place prior to time, bids adieu to all our local ideas of *soon* and *late*, *before* and *after*; and leaves us enveloped with what has no beginning, no middle, no limits, no end.

And although creation has not been from all eternity, yet it does not follow that there ever was in God the absence of a creative power. The creative power of God is certainly only a particular modification of active energy, which, instead of implying the absence of *omnipotent* power, clearly demonstrates the certainty of its being, and proves omnipotent power to be inseparable from the divine nature. And even if this particular modification of active energy were withdrawn, the presence of which is necessary to support all finite Being, in this present state of existence, yet it would not prove the absence of an omnipresent Being; nor yet the total annihilation of any finite intelligence;—it might absorb the indivi-

luation of Being, but it would not prove the annihilation of Being itself. But to admit the total absence of the divine power, we must admit the total absence of the divine Being, and consequently destroy the existence of God, who can no more exist abstracted from his power, than he can exist abstracted from his own existence, of which the divine power is an essential attribute.

Whether the absence of that particular active energy, (the presence of which was necessary to produce creation) be of itself sufficient to produce the nonentity of Being, is quite a distinct question. If the absence of this active energy, or any particular modification of the divine power be sufficient to the production of annihilation, while the *omnipotency* and *omnipresency* of God remain entire, we must suppose annihilation to take place where we admit the Deity perfectly to exist, and how annihilation can possibly take place within the very bosom of Deity, without any action of divine power, we shall probably never know until we can reconcile contradictions.

If the absence of the divine power be sufficient to the annihilation of any finite Being, it is certain that this annihilation must take place where God is not; or wherever the divine Being is, it is certain that annihilation cannot be. For to suppose the existence of a point which describes the nonentity of Being, while we admit in this point the Deity to have a full and positive existence, is to admit this point to contain a nonentity, while we admit the existence of God within its confines. This point must then contain an entity and a nonentity at the same time. If the absence of the particular active energy of the divine nature produces annihilation, the soul must then retire out of *Being*, and drop to *God*, (who is the fountain and source of all existence) which is a plain contradiction, since the total

absence of omnipotent power must certainly be impossible. And whether the absence of power, if it were admitted possible, be sufficient to the annihilation of Being, must be the subject of the next section.

SECTION VIII.

That the Absence of Power is insufficient to annihilate the Soul.

I NOW proceed to examine the remaining part of that objection, which was started in the preceding section, namely,—"that *the mere absence of power* "is alone sufficient to annihilate the soul."

That all finite Beings originate in, and are supported in existence by the power of God, I fully admit, and that the divine power is infinite and universal, I have endeavoured to prove in the preceding section: But that the *total absence* of the divine power is possible, I have contended against, and am fully persuaded, that if its total absence be admitted to be possible, it will amount to a total denial of some of the most essential attributes, and consequently of the existence and being of God. It may, perhaps, be said—"that if the theory I have ad-"vanced be admitted,—if the absence of the divine "power be impossible, it will make all things neces-"sarily existent." But to this I reply, that the theory I have advanced, makes the annihilation of the soul (if it be possible) to depend upon the *power*, and not the absence of the power of God. The *positive*, *certain*, and *unalterable* existence of Omnipotent power, and the peculiar direction and modification of that power, I consider as two distinct ideas; the former of which is an essential attribute of the unchangeable nature of God, the absence of which cannot be admitted, without admitting a pal-

pable contradiction; but the latter depending entirely upon the will of an infinitely free and powerful Being, may assume a variety of directions without affecting the immutability of the nature of God.

That any particular mode of *active energy* may be withdrawn, I readily allow, but still contend that if that mode of active energy be withdrawn, nothing but power can withdraw it; and if this *active energy* of the divine power be withdrawn by power, and the soul sink into *nonentity* through its absence, the power which withdraws this active energy, must be the cause of that annihilation which follows from the active operation of it; and the active energy which is withdrawn by the influence of the withdrawing power, can be nothing more than a mere instrument, through which this withdrawing power acts. *Mere absence*, therefore, cannot produce annihilation.

It is certain, that if the mere absence of power be admitted as sufficient to the annihilation of the soul, this *absence* must either *constitute* annihilation in itself, or be the *cause* which produces it; there being no other way through which the mere absence of power can be conceived as possible. For if the mere absence of power neither *constitutes* nor *causes* the annihilation of the soul, it can bear no relation to that nonentity of Being, which is attributed to the removal of power, and consequently the soul can never perish by its absence.

It is certain, that if the mere absence of power *constitutes* the annihilation of the soul, the presence of power must constitute its Being. For if the presence of this power do not constitute the identity of the soul, the absence of which *constitutes* annihilation, we must admit this power (previous to its removal) to be extraneous to the identity of the soul; and, consequently, that power which is extraneous to the real and personal identity of the soul, can

never, through its absence, constitute the annihilation of a substance, to the identity of which it is admitted to be extraneous. I therefore think the conclusion certain—that unless the presence of power *constitutes* the identity of the soul, the absence of power can never constitute its annihilation. But in admiting mere power to constitute the identity of any substance, we must totally deny the being of all substances, and reduce all our notions of matter and spirit to chemerical absurdities, and even bid adieu to our own existence.

If matter and spirit do exist, mere power cannot constitute the identity of either; and if they do not exist, they can neither be supported in existence by the presence, nor annihilated by the absence of power, and all our reasonings about both matter and spirit, can have no kind of foundation nor existence whatever. If, therefore, the absence of power *constitutes* the annihilation of the soul, the presence of power must constitute its identity; but as to admit the identity of the soul to consist in mere power, will prove the entire negation of all substances, I think the final result perfectly conclusive—that the *mere absence* of power can never *constitute* the annihilation of the soul.

As the mere absence of power, for reasons already assigned, cannot constitute the annihilation of the soul, the remaining enquiry is—Whether the absence of power can *occasion*, or be the *cause* of, the soul's annihilation?

That all finite Beings were created by God, and created by a particular display of active energy, which nothing but Omnipotence could exert, are truths that cannot rationally be opposed. But I consider this display of active energy, through which creation took place, as distinct from that Omnipotent Power which called this creative active energy into action. And as creation was the work of God,

when it was completed, there could have been no occasion for the perpetuity of this exertion. Substances were formed by a particular display of energy, and are supported in existence by that Omnipotent Power on which they rest, which *pervades*, and *fills*, and *envelopes* all. The power of *self-subsistence* must have been incorporated in their natures to enable them to continue in existence, after the display of creative energy had subsided; and nothing but a new display of active energy can retrace the paths of creative power. If the same display of energy, which called things into their primeval forms, were necessary to their continuance in existence, creation must have been imperfect, and the same display of active energy would have continued creating, without intermission, forever. But as this is not the case, we have all the evidence moral certainty can give us, that those substances which God at first created, endued with the power of *self-subsistence*, require nothing more to support them in existence, than that power on which they rest; which is immutable and eternal; the absence of which is impossible, in which state they must continue until a new display of active energy shall strike them from existence. And as finite existence could have taken place by the laws of nature, the annihilation of Being, (if it be possible) must be equally removed from every mode of operation which these laws discover and can never be accounted for by creatures that are only subject to their influence.

If the uniform continuance of that particular energy, which at first called creation into existence, be necessary to support created nature in existence, we shall never be able to distinguish between *creation* and *preservation*,—between the calling things originally into a state of positive existence, and the continuing the thing formed in its present state of Being; nor know with precision whether any crea-

ted substance be complete or not. And to admit the selfsame display of *active energy* to continue alike through the creation of substances, and the preservation of them, will lead us to attribute to this energy an uniformity of effect, which is at once contradicted by the supposition under consideration, as well as fact. The presence, therefore, of any continual exertion of energy to preserve created substances in existence, cannot be necessary to the perpetuity of what God has created, unless we admit creation to be imperfect; and to admit the *imperfection* of *creation*, is to admit creation, and to deny it, at the same time.—The continuance of a creative energy that creates nothing, is a contradiction in terms. As, then, a *creative* energy can no longer exist than while it is creating, and as the power which supports creation is omnipotent, and therefore an essential attribute of God; as the former with *created* substances can have no *present* existence, and as the absence of the latter is impossible,—the mere absence of power can never *produce*, nor be the *cause* of the annihilation of the soul.

If the mere absence of power be the cause of the soul's annihilation, the soul's annihilation must be the effect of a nonentity; (for the absence of power must be a nonentity); and to make an effect to result from what must be a nonentity, and which therefore can have no power to produce it, is to attribute to the *absence of power*, an energy that nothing but power can possess; which is supposing power to be present, while nothing but the absence of power is admitted to exist. And by admitting the mere absence of power to be the *cause* of annihilation, we must attribute an active energy to that nonentity of power, which we admit to be destitute of it, and is a contradiction.

That the absence of power must be destitute of all energy, will admit of no denial; and therefore

the innate powers of consciousness and perception, which are essential properties of the soul, can never perish through an energy of which the absence of power must be totally destitute. And as nothing but *energy* can quench the natural powers of the soul, which energy the absence of power cannot possess, the powers of the soul can never through this cause be deprived of existence. I therefore conclude, that whether we suppose the mere *absence of power* to be *devoid* of energy, or *possessed* of it; as the former will prevent it from quenching the innate powers of the soul, and as the latter implies a contradiction, the mere absence of power can, in neither case, be the *cause* of the annihilation of the soul.

If power support the soul in existence, and the absence of this power produce its nonentity, this absence of power must be produced by power, or it must not. If this absence of power be produced by power, power must be the active cause of the nonentity of the soul, which activity will at once demonstrate the insufficiency of the absence of power to annihilate the soul; but if this absence of power be not occasioned by power, we must suppose the power that supports the soul in existence, to be removed by *no power*; and that which is removed by no power, must continue forever. In supposing the *absence of power* to remove power, we must make it to contribute towards its own existence, and to act before it had a Being. And we must attribute to it an inactivity and energy, of which, from its very name and nature it must necessarily be destitute, which is a palpable contradiction. In admitting the power that supports the soul in existence, to be removed by power, we call into existence an active cause, and discard the absence of power from being the cause of annihilation; and in admitting the power that supports the soul in existence, to be removed by *no power*, the soul, which is supported

thereby, must continue for ever; and that which continues for ever, instead of being reduced to a nonentity, must be immortal. I therefore think this conclusion certain also—that the mere absence of power can neither *constitute*, nor be the *cause* of the soul's annihilation.

That all finite substances were created by power, will not, I believe, be denied by any; and if the mere *absence of power*, can counteract and annihilate what nothing but power could create; the absence of power must be equal in its efficacy to power itself. For if the mere absence of power can counteract the efficacy of power, we must attribute to the absence of power, an energy which nothing but power can possess; but in supposing the absence of power to be possessed of power, we must suppose power to be where, from the nature of the supposition, and from the import of the term itself, power cannot be, which is a contradiction, and therefore cannot be admitted.

However the soul may be supported in existence by any power, it is certain, from its actual existence, that it must have a distinct identity in itself, independent of that power which supports it in existence; and if so, all power must be extraneous to its real identity; and therefore, that power which supports the soul in existence, and is extraneous to the identity of the soul, can never, either through its presence or absence, change the nature of that substance, to the identity of which it is extraneous. For if we admit the distinct identity of the soul, and suppose it to be supported in existence, by a power which is distinct from that identity; it is among the grossest absurdities, to suppose that *the absence* of this power can effect the Being of the soul, to whose identity the presence of power was extraneous. If the *presence* of power was extraneous, the absence of power must be equally so; and therefore

the soul can never perish through the absence of power, which must not only be remote from the identity of the soul, but totally destitute of all energy and action, and consequently devoid of all influence. If the mere absence of power be supposed to occasion the annihilation of the soul, I would ask—Does this *absence of power* possess power, or not? If it possesses power, we must admit a contradiction; and if it does not possess power, that substance which positively exists independent of it, can never perish by it; and therefore the mere absence of power must be insufficient to produce annihilation.

That the power, occasioning the absence of that active energy which supports the soul in existence, must be different from that active energy itself, is, I think, demonstrable from this consideration,—that the active energy, which is supposed to support the soul in existence, must be necessary to its Being; and the power which recals this active energy, is that which deprives it of existence. Can the same modification of active energy, which supports the soul in existence, be the same that deprives it of Being? If so, it must be the absence of itself,—it must be a power that supports the soul in existence, and a power that deprives it of Being, at the same time. If the same power that supports the soul in existence can withdraw itself, and through the absence of this power, the soul sinks into a nonentity, the nature of this power must first be changed, in order to produce these opposite effects; and if the nature of a *supporting* power be changed, before it can absent itself from the soul; it is not the same modification of power, but another; which is not the subject under present consideration. In admitting a *supporting* power to withdraw itself from that substance, which is supposed to be supported by it, we must admit it (if it be the same modification of power)

to be a supporting power, and not a supporting power, at the same time ;—for a supporting power that does not support, is a plain contradiction. In admitting a supporting power to withdraw itself, we must admit its previous nature to be done away ; and the power which was previously *supporting*, must now become *destructive*. But this affords us a distinct modification of power, and by admitting a distinct modification of power, we admit the necessity of an active cause to produce annihilation ; and therefore the soul can never perish, either by the presence, or absence, of that modification of power which *supports* the soul in existence. The modification of power which supports the soul in existence, must be a *supporting one*, and therefore cannot deprive the soul of Being, nor absent itself from the soul while it retains its nature. The presence of this power must support the soul in existence ; its mere absence can do nothing, (if it were admitted possible) ; and that which deprives the soul of Being, must be a power, which is not *supporting*, but *destructive*.

Thus, then, from these arguments, I think the final result decisive,—that the total absence of the Divine Power is absolutely impossible,—and that this Omnipotent power alone, can support the soul in existence : That if the absence of any particular modification of the Divine Power were possible, while that particular modification of power retained its name and nature, still the mere absence of any modification of power, must be alike insufficient, either to *constitute* annihilation, or to *produce* it. And if the mere absence of power, can neither *constitute* annihilation, nor be the occasion of it, an active cause must be admitted. And if the admission of an active cause, must imply *progression* in the activity of its operations ; and progression cannot apply to those actions through which an immaterial sub-

stance can alone be capable of perishing, because such substances must be destitute of all *dimensions* and without interior or surface; it must follow, that neither the absence nor presence of power, can possibly annihilate the soul, through any way, or mode, or manner, which God has placed within the circle of human comprehension. And that which cannot be annihilated, either by the presence or absence of power, must according to our views, necessarily be immortal.

SECTION IX.

Spiritual Mediums are as remote as material ones from Nonentity—The Distance maintained has no Relation to Space.

WHEN we take a survey of that influence, which all causes display in the production of their own effects, we cannot avoid concluding that some agreement in nature must inevitably subsist between them. Whenever an action takes place, it is certain that there must be something which produces it:—For to suppose an *action* without an *actor*, is a plain contradiction. And it is equally certain, that all causes, in order to produce effects, must either act through the instrumentality of mediums, or produce effects purely from themselves. And whatever these mediums are, through which any given cause is supposed to operate, to the production of its own effect; still these mediums through which it operates, must act as links in the chain of causes and effects, to bring the cause and effect into contact with one another.

As the exchange of *Being* for *not Being*, is of itself a positive action, an actor to produce it, must necessarily be admitted. And whether the cause

which produces it, act through a medium or without it, the cause and the effect, must be brought into contact with one another.

Whatever these mediums are, through which the cause is supposed to operate, in order to produce annihilation, it is certain, that they must have a Being; for no cause can make that to be a medium of action, which has no kind of existence. But if these mediums have a Being, it is then certain, that they must (in point of real existence) be equally removed from annihilation with that cause which is supposed to operate upon them, or to act through their instrumentality. For as both cause and medium, from the actions which we attribute to them, must be admitted to exist; and as annihilation is a perfect nonentity, an infinite distance must forever subsist between them. And what is at an infinite distance from annihilation, can never be brought into contact with it.

However much, distinct parcels of matter may be separated from one another, by the peculiar quantities or qualities of which they are composed, still absolute *nonentity* must be at an equal distance, both from an *atom* and a *world*. An atom can be no nearer to a *nonentity*, in point of real Being, than the whole mass of universal nature; and therefore, neither an atom nor a world, can ever be made instrumental to the production of that, which is at an infinite distance from both.

If, from mediums which are material, we turn to those that are spiritual and incorporeal, the same modes of reasoning will hold equally good. A spiritual nature, whatever its essence may be, if it be acted upon, must necessarily have a Being; (for one which has no Being can never be made the vehicle of action) and therefore must be at an equal distance from a nonentity, with that Being, which is supposed to act upon, or through it. I grant, a spiritual sub-

stance (which is the *medium* under consideration) may be supposed to be perfectly passive; but passiveness implies existence, as much as activity. For the difference between material and spiritual Beings,—between an active cause, and the mediums through which it acts, lies in the *nature* and *manner* of existence, but not in the *certainty* of existence itself.

Whatever has any existence, must be at an infinite distance from that which has not, and therefore, can never be brought into contact with it. And where no contact can be formed between cause and effect, either through the instrumentality of any medium, or abstracted from it, there no effect can be produced. If, then, annihilation be produced, it must be produced by something; and that which produces, must be brought into contact with it. But as the distance between *Being*, and *not Being*, is, and must be infinite; and as nothing but that which has a Being, can either act, or be acted upon, it necessarily follows,—that no such contact can be formed, and consequently no such effect produced. Annihilation, therefore, cannot be the effect of any Being; and that which cannot be effected by any Being, must remain unaccomplished for ever. And the evident result of all, therefore, is—that the human soul must necessarily be immortal.

Whatever annihilates the soul, must operate upon it; and what operates upon, must be brought into contact with it; and what is brought into contact with the soul, can no longer preserve its physical distance from it. These propositions are self-evident, and it is a contradiction to suppose the reverse of either. If, then, that which annihilates the soul, must be brought into contact with it; if the soul be pure, abstracted life; and if life and death belong to those extremes by which God has divided things; the soul cannot be accessible to its own extreme, and consequently must be immortal.

Either the distance which divides life from death, must continue forever, or it must be removed:—If it be removed, the very idea of death is annihilated by that removal; if it continue, the soul can never perish; and in either case it must be immortal.

Let it not be imagined that the distance of which I here speak, has any relation to space; the idea of space is foreign to the question. In relation to space, death is a mere nonentity; it can neither have a a positive nor relative existence here; and can only relate to the physical distance which lies in the nature of things. If this distance lay in any relation it bore to space, it would be hard to say how far it might be dispensed with. The progress of time may be productive of events that may baffle calculation, and overcome distances, which to us are inconceivable; but where the distance is placed in the physical nature of *extremes*, as in the case before us; and where the removal of it implies the grossest of contradictions; the human understanding recoils at the idea of annihilation, and the immortality of the soul presses itself upon us with an evidence that is irresistible. The mind, while floating in an ocean of uncertainties, may languish under the doubts of scepticism and error; and we may hazard conjectures which will terminate in a doubtful issue; but to abstract ourselves from corporeal Being, to examine subjects which it is our highest interest to know, is to ensure to ourselves certainty, as the recompense of exertion.

Whatever has any relation to space, must occupy it; and what occupies it, must be extended; and what is extended, must be formed of parts; and what is formed of parts, must be capable of dissolution; and what is capable of dissolution, cannot (in that state) be physically immortal. There is, therefore, no other alternative left,—either the soul must

have a relation to space, and be material; or it must be immaterial, and have no such relation.

It has been already proved, that matter, under every form it is capable of assuming, is unable to think; and that the supposition implies a palpable contradiction. And if we suppose that a thinking quality can be added to any material substance, this substance, to which this thinking quality is added, must have had a previous existence, with which, from that previous existence, notwithstanding its addition, this thinking quality can have no physical relation.

It will, perhaps, be asked, How can any thing exist in space, without having some relation to it? Or, how can any thing, having no such relation, exist in it? I might also ask, If an *action* be performed within the limits of pure distance,—can that action thus exist, without having some relation to that *distance*, within the limits of which it is performed? If it can, the solution will apply to the former case; if not, we must admit a relation, without being able to trace it, and without having any knowledge of such relation, or we must totally deny the existence of all *action*. The former is a plain contradiction, because it supposes the *knowledge* of a relation, without any such *knowledge;* and the latter contradicts common sense.

As all actions must be performed within the limits of pure distance, without having any relation to it; so volition, and that substance which is similar thereto in nature, and from whence it proceeds, must exist in space also; while the ideas themselves can have no kind of relation to one another. To ask, Whether virtue or vice be *square* or *oblong?* Whether the abstract idea of *red*, be more ponderous than that of *blue?* Or, whether the *primary* or *sensible qualities* of substances, be more *obtuse* than those conceptions which we have of them?—are questions which demonstrate their own absurdity. And it is certain

to all who examine with minuteness and attention, that the soul itself, although existing in space, can have no more relation to it, than those questions can have with the decisions expected from them. To decide whether a conception of the mind, includes within it more *substantiality*, than is included in an *inference* from that conception, is at once frivolous and absurd. The mind can easily have a perception of difference between these two ideas; while to that of substantiality, it can annex no association of either.

How any thing can exist in space without having any relation to it, is a question which, perhaps, we shall never know. To solve this question, it is necessary that we have some determinate idea of space; but this is absolutely impossible; for if space be an *infinite* and immoveable expansion, which must be admitted, it must necessarily be placed beyond the limits of finite comprehension. An expansion which can be grasped by any finite intelligence, cannot be infinite; and an expansion which is infinite, can be grasped only by an infinite comprehension. And, therefore, from the finitude of our natures, we can form but very partial and inadequate notions of its nature.

If space be infinite in expansion, whatever has any existence, either *possible* or *real*—either *positive* or *relative*, must exist within it; but it does not from thence follow, that every real or relative existence must have a relation to space. The mind can form ten thousand abstractions, which can have no more relation to space than they can to duration: yet it is certain, that every abstraction of the mind must be made within the confines of both; while it is equally certain, that they can have no relation to either. If man were able to comprehend infinite expansion, he would be no longer man;—and, therefore, while the identity of man is preserved in the vast chain of Being, whatever is infinite, must necessarily elude our

comprehension, by the finitude of our natures. An expansion which is, and must be, infinite, must necessarily include within its confines, all real and possible Being; were not this the case, we must suppose an existence without space, or a portion of space where space is not; either of which suppositions is a contradiction.

It is not because space is necessary to our formation of the idea of *Being*, but from its infinite diffusion, that we are certain that all *existence* must be included in it; for all Being must exist, either in real or mental *vacuum*. The idea of Being does not include within it the idea of space, as necessary to the formation of that idea; but when the idea of any possible Being is formed, the necessity of space arises from the utter impossibility of any thing existing in a state of perfect abstraction from it.

Every conception of the mind, as well as the mind itself, must exist in space; not that space is necessary to the conception or Being of either, but because infinite expansion encircles and envelopes all; and, therefore, to conceive--that to *exist in*, and to *occupy space*, are terms of the same import, is, I humbly conceive, a gross mistake. Use may have rendered an association of the two ideas so familiar, that we may have blended and incorporated them together; but if their natures are found to be distinct, no locality of thought can in the least affect the identity of either.

Whatever occupies space, must undoubtedly exist in it; but it does not follow, that whatever exists in space, must therefore *occupy* it. To the former case belong all material natures; and to the latter all immaterial substances, and those mental abstractions which result from the peculiar directions of their natures. No two portions of matter can occupy the same identity of space in the same instant; it is a contradiction to suppose it; but volition can never,

by *pre-occupying*, preclude the entrance of matter from any given portion of space whatever. The mind can wander, with equal facility, through a perfect *vacuum*, or a rock of adamant, and feel no obstruction from either. It must, therefore, be evident, that there is a peculiar difference, between the *existing in*, and the *occupying* of space.

If the soul of man be a substance distinct from, and independent of, all material Being, it must necessarily be *immaterial*; and may, on that account, exist in space, without occupying it. The component parts of body must still remain under every form which matter may assume; but simple modification can never affect identity. If matter, as matter, be capable of thinking, it must be capable in all its forms; if not, *form* can never communicate to it, a quality which is foreign to its nature. Form, is but a configuration of parts; and it is a contradiction to suppose, that mere arrangement can communicate to that which it is an arrangement of, a quality which is possessed by neither.

CHAPTER II.

THAT NOTHING BUT ANNIHILATION CAN DESTROY THE SOUL;—AND THAT ANNIHILATION CANNOT APPLY TO ANY SIMPLE SUBSTANCE.

SECTION I.

Thinking is not connate with Matter—The Soul is indivisible and incapable of Corruption, there being no stamen of corruption in its Nature.

WHETHER the Great God can communicate to matter, a quality of thinking, is a distinct question. But the very idea of such a communication,

necessarily implies the previous existence of matter; and demonstrates that thinking can never be *connate* with that substance, which must have existed previous to, and which stands in need of, such a communicable quality. The very supposition that God can, in the infinitude of his *power and wisdom*, communicate to matter a quality of thinking, is a decisive proof that matter, as such, does not; and in its own nature, cannot think. If then, matter be incapable of thinking, under every modification, and man be capable of abstraction and reflection, in all their forms; it must follow,—that there is in man, a certain substance distinct from, and independent of, all material nature; and that which is distinct from, and independent of, matter, must necessarily be immaterial.

If, then, there be in man such an immaterial substance, it must be indivisible in its nature, and destitute of parts; for if it be not indivisible it is not an individual substance, but an assemblage of distinct individuals of the same species. An immaterial substance can be but one; the admission of others annihilates the very idea, and obliges the mind to have recourse to a series of subtractions, till it arrives at a simple unit.

If an union of these substances be necessary to form a cogitative Being, then it is evident, that neither of these individuals, in this union, is of itself capable of cogitation; and if neither be capable, then either may be taken away. But if either be taken away, then cogitation, which depended upon an union of the whole, must be destroyed. And to make cogitation to depend for its existence, upon an union of individual substances of the same species, neither of which, in itself, possesses cogitation; when the removal of one, which is *uncogitative*, annihilates the nature of *cogitation*;—is to make an union of these substances necessary to cogi-

tation, and not necessary at the same time. It therefore must follow, that cogitation can only result from one identical, individual, uncompounded, immaterial substance; which must include the ideas of divisibility and separation.

If a Being, thus constituted, be capable of corruptibility, this corruptibility must proceed, either from itself, or something exterior. From itself it cannot possibly be, because it is a contradiction in terms, to suppose that any simple substance, which actually exists, can possess the power of altering the permanency of its nature. If that innate power, which denominates the soul's certainty of existence, be capable of corrupting it, that power must act in opposition to itself.—It must tend to corruption, and yet remain incorruptible at the same time; and therefore, a simple essence which thus exists, must necessarily, from the nature of its existence, include within it the idea of incorruptibility. A simple essence, which tends to its own corruption, implies within that essence an hostility of power, which is utterly inconsistent with the simplicity of its nature; for it has been already proved, that the soul is a *simple* essence; and therefore, this hostility of power must necessarily be excluded; and from this exclusion it follows, that corruption cannot be from itself. A Being which is simple and uncompounded in its nature, must necessarily retain that nature which denominates its identity; unless this be admitted, it is not the same Being, but another; and what retains through its simplicity, the denomination of its own identity, must necessarily exclude, through that *simplicity* of nature, every internal propensity and tendency to corruption or decay.

To imagine a Being to exist, (which is simple and uncompounded in its own nature), with an internal propensity to decay, includes the grossest of contradictions. Its very existence demonstrates that

it is in *Being;* and the simplicity of that existence excludes from it the possibility of such a tendency, in opposition to the supposition in the case given.

A simple Being, therefore, which is in existence, (which is supposed to have an internal tendency to decay) includes in it this contradiction;—it supposes the Being to be simple and uncompounded in its nature, while that very tendency which it is supposed to possess, places itself in direct opposition to that simplicity;—a Being thus constituted must be *simple*, and yet *not simple*, at the same time.

A substance which has any tendency to corruption, supposes in that substance something capable of corruption; but this gives to us an idea of parts, which destroys the idea of unity, and which is incompatible with the uncompounded nature of the soul. But if the idea of parts, be included in the capability of corruption, and the soul be a simple essence, and therefore without parts; it necessarily follows—that it must be destitute of all tendency, to that corruption which is hostile to its identity, and which must therefore be, incompatible with its nature. And that which excludes through the simplicity of its nature, all tendency to corruption, must necessarily be immortal.

As corruption cannot proceed either from the internal nature, or from the tendency of the soul, so neither can it be occasioned by any thing exterior to it. It has been already proved, in a former section, that the human soul is one of those extremes, which is fixed by the God of nature, in that remote situation, which must forever secure it from what is opposite to its nature. But waving the energy of this argument, I will now suppose it possible, that the soul can be approached by what is the reverse of its nature, and that it may wait the arrival of its own *antipodes*. In this case, whatever can corrupt the soul, must commence the attack; and this must ei-

ther be by violence, or by communicating a contaminating quality. What the abstract nature of corruption is, it is, perhaps, not easy to ascertain; but be it what it may, it is certain, that it must include one of these two ideas—either by the disjunction of cohesive particles by violence, or the subdual of the soul by mere contamination.

A substance, like the soul, can have no parts; and what has no parts, must ever be impervious, in its own nature, to all violence, and invulnerable against all assaults. Whatever has no parts, can never lose them; and what has nothing which it can possibly lose, must remain unchangeably the same; and what remains the same, must necessarily be immortal. And if the soul have nothing which it can possib y lose of itself, because it has no parts, and therefore is physically incapable of separation, it must follow also, that not one of those radical affections which the soul possesses can expire, because they derive their existence from the stability of their primary principle. And as there is no part to which violence can possibly have access, there is no property which is capable of subduction; and therefore the soul, with all the appendages of its affections, must be for ever inaccessible to violence or decay.

Neither can the soul perish through contamination. Contamination, abstracted from all substance, is but a relative term; and mere relation can never affect the identity of positive existence; the soul, therefore, cannot be corrupted by any thing which is but a *mere relation*. But if contamination be considered as the effect of external application, the former arguments will still apply; and notwithstanding its approaches to the soul, the soul must ever be inaccessible to its influence; because nothing which is foreign to its nature can ever incorporate with its essence; and that which cannot incorporate with its

essence, can never corrupt by its contamination: and in either case, the immortality of the soul necessarily results from the incorruptibility of its nature.

In admitting corruption to take place on a Being which is simple in its own nature, we suppose both the presence and absence of that very Being which is corrupted. Corruption is the reverse of incorruption; and the identity of a simple Being which is not in a state of corruption, must be changed before it can be what it is not; for it is a contradiction to suppose, that an incorruptible substance can be corrupted without losing its *nature* and *essence*. The very essence of its nature, places it beyond the possibility of becoming what it is not; and the immutable lines which divide *identity* from *diversity*, must be forever secured by the uncontroulable laws of nature. And therefore, to suppose any simple Being to *be*, what it is not supposed to *be*, is a contradiction in terms, and is one of those self-evident errors which carry with them their own refutation.

If any given substance be supposed capable of corruption, the actual existence of that substance, is necessary to the idea of its corruption; for it is a contradiction in terms, to suppose any Being to be corrupted, which has no existence. But if the actual existence of that substance, be necessary to the idea of its corruption; and this substance be uncompounded, and destitute of parts; the very existence of this substance (without which corruption is impossible) precludes the very possibility of that corruption, by which it is supposed to perish. A simple essence must have an existence, or it must not; if it have, corruption must be excluded by the simplicity of that existence; if not, corruption is totally impossible. Whatever has a simple Being, must retain that Being while it exists, and, therefore cannot be corrupted during that period; and when it

ceases to exist, it is no longer a subject of corruption.

Corruption can never operate upon a simple Being which has no existence ; and the very nature of corruption must be excluded by admitting a Being to exist which is simple and uncompounded.

Corruption is, and ever must be the reverse of incorruption ; and whether stability or instability be the distinguishing characteristic of an immaterial substance, that which is *not*, must necessarily be excluded by that which *is*. If stability be its characteristic, instability and mutation must be excluded, or we must suppose the same Being to be possessed of stability, and not possessed of it at the same time. The same reasoning will hold equally good if the case be exactly reversed ; and in either case it will equally end in a contradiction.

To suppose any simple substance to be what it is not, and what, from its nature and essence it is even supposed not to be, is a position which will admit of no defence ; and yet this contradiction must be maintained, by admitting even the possibility of the corruption of an immaterial substance.

Nor will it be of any avail to suppose, "that the "seeds of corruption were sown in the soul at its "primary formation ; that they have 'grown with "its growth, and strengthened with its strength ;' "and, that its final extinction is nothing but the ne- "cessary result of things."

If there be within the soul such a stamen of corruption as the objection supposes, it is certain that this stamen must have been coeval with the soul's existence ; for without admitting this, the soul must have existed previous to this corrupting stamen ; and if we admit its previous existence, the reasonings advanced above, must forever preclude it from being acquired. But if we admit this stamen of corruption to have been coeval with the soul, we

mmediately contradict the simplicity of its nature, nd take into our conception the idea of a com-ounded Being. It has been already proved that a onscious principle must be simple in its nature, and hat it can only exist in *unity*; and if so, it is a con-radiction to its simplicity, to admit a stamen of orruption to be implanted within it, and to ripen to naturity through the gradations of nature. The ery supposition takes into the conception two dis-nct ideas;—first, *that* of a simple, uncompounded ssence; and, secondly, *that* of a stamen of cor-uption moving on in a graduated state.

If this stamen of corruption, as well as the essen-al properties of the soul, be included in the nature f the soul, How can the soul be simple and un-ompounded? If this stamen of corruption be in-luded within the soul, I would again ask—Is this tamen necessary to the soul's existence or not? If be, it must be inseparable from the soul, and, herefore, can never destroy it; if not, it must still e foreign to its nature, and therefore can have no ccession. To suppose any thing which is necessary any given substance, and which is included in the ea of that substance, to be capable of destroying , is in effect to say, that it is necessary to the ex-tence of that substance, and not necessary at the me time. And to suppose any thing to be in-uded within the nature of any *simple* substance, hich is not necessary to the existence of that sub-ance, is a contradiction in terms. And view the ea in what form soever we may, a stamen of cor-uption must be inadmissibl · in a simple substance; d, therefore, no such stamen can possibly exist in e human soul.

SECTION II.

Admitting a Principle of Corruption, it cannot ultimately destroy the Soul—The Soul cannot perish from any Cause, either in itself, or exterior to it—The Soul is invariably independent, and inaccessible to all Violence; it is necessarily immortal.

IF from this priority of Being, in which I have been considering the objection, we turn our thoughts to its consequences and issue, and from the admission of the principle, trace it to its remote conclusion, the same or similar absurdities will arise. In tracing this objection to its final issue, let us suppose the soul to be wholly annihilated; and when this is the case, either this stamen of corruption must survive the soul, or perish with it. If it survive, we must admit corruption, while we deny the existence of that which is corrupted; if it perish with the soul, then it is impossible that it should be the occasion of the soul's extinction. The effect and its cause can never be coeval with one another. Dissolution nor annihilation can never be coeval with that which occasioned it. And yet to suppose *that*, which occasions the soul's destruction, and the soul itself to expire together, is to blend together both cause and effect, and to destroy that priority of existence in the cause, which alone can distinguish it from its own effects; and thus blended together, a stamen of corruption is supposed to be the cause of the soul's final ruin, and yet not the cause, at the same time. On the whole, it is evident from the nature and essence of the soul, that it can have no such stamen of corruption; and if it had, it must have included a contradiction.

To admit the corruption of a simple substance which has no existence, is a contradiction; and to

suppose corruption in one which perfectly exists and in the idea of which, corruption is not included, is to suppose that substance to be, and not to be, at the same time. And the final result of all is,—that the soul must be incorruptible, and that which is incorruptible, must necessarily be immortal.

If the soul perish, it must be from some cause; and this cause must either be from itself, or something else;—if from itself, it must arise either from choice or necessity. It cannot be from choice, because this implies a physical contrariety between the action which is produced, and that cause which produced it. Where there is a physical contrariety, there can be no relation; and what has no relation, can neither be an effect nor cause. The idea of choice, therefore, involves in it this contradiction, that there is a relation between the cause and its effects, and no such relation, at the same time.—Neither can it be from necessity, because physical necessity must ever be incompatible with physical freedom. And to suppose a conscious Being to act upon itself, from the impulse of physical necessity, supposes an *annihilation* of those powers which are essential to the existence of that very consciousness, which is thus influenced by this physical impulse. For neither judgment, understanding, nor perception are necessary to the existence of physical impulse; and if not necessary, they may be dispensed with; and we are left to form an idea of an immaterial substance, after we admit its essential properties to be destroyed.

If the soul perish through a necessity which is implanted within itself, either those *properties* of the soul which constitute its Being, must be in existence when it is thus impelled, or they must not. If they be in existence, we must admit their existence after their uses are supplanted by necessity. For as neither *judgment*, *understanding*, nor *perception* can be necessary to the existence of the soul, while it is

impelled by physical impulse; if they exist, we must admit the *judgment* to exist while its decisions are rendered nugatory, the understanding to exist while its comprehension can afford no ground for action; and we must admit the existence of a *perception*, which, while it is overruled by the impulses of necessity, must be blind to the relations of those things which it is presumed to be the perception of. And to admit a *judgment*, the decisions of which are rendered nugatory; an *understanding*, whose comprehension can afford no ground for action; and a *perception*, which is blind to those objects it is presumed to be the perception of; is to admit a judgment which cannot decide, an understanding which cannot comprehend, and a perception which is destitute of discernment. And to admit a judgment without decision, an understanding without comprehension, and a perception without discernment, will conduct us to a region which involves the mind in shadows; but whether of contradictions or absurdities, it is hard to say. But if these properties that are essential to the existence of the soul, be not in existence when the soul is thus impelled to destruction by necessity, we shall be obliged to suppose an annihilation of these properties, in order that an action may follow which is alone capable of producing annihilation, the absurdity of which every intelligent reader must discover. In admitting the existence of these properties of the soul when it is thus impelled, we must suppose their *natures* to be annihilated while the *properties* themselves remain: and in supposing these properties not to exist, we must suppose the soul to exist after those properties are destroyed, which are essentially necessary to the soul's existence. The soul, therefore, cannot perish from itself, either through choice or necessity.

Can the soul, then, perish through any external cause? All external causes must be either material,

or immaterial in their own natures; and if the soul perish through a material cause, it must perish through a cause which has no relation to it. Howsoever annihilation be produced, the cause from whence it proceeds must communicate its influence, and that influence must be brought into contact with the object to be destroyed;—for where a cause can extend no influence, it can produce no effect. But to suppose a material cause extending itself to an immaterial nature, is to suppose an extension of which it is necessarily incapable; which is a palpable contradiction. For to suppose any given substance to retain its own nature, and yet to extend beyond the physical boundaries of that nature, is to suppose it to retain its own nature, and not retain it, at the same time. The soul, therefore, cannot perish through a material cause.

It now remains to be considered whether its annihilation can proceed from an immaterial cause.—Whatever this immaterial cause may be, it is certain, that it must possess intelligence, because an immaterial power which is abstracted from all intelligence, is a *nonentity*, of which we can form no conception. If, then, the soul perish through an immaterial, intelligent power or agent, this agent must operate in its effects, quite contrary to its own nature; and this necessarily ends in the same contradiction that the supposition does, of the soul annihilating itself through choice. For to suppose any intelligent agent to possess a power which produces an effect which is contrary to itself, and while it retains a nature which is contrary to the effect produced by it, is to suppose it capable of producing such an effect, and incapable of producing it at the same time.

If, therefore, the soul cannot perish from itself, either through choice or necessity, nor from any external cause; not material, because it is contrary to its nature; not immaterial, because it is similar to its

nature; and because such considerations end in a palpable contradiction, it necessarily follows, that the soul must be immortal.

If nature, "which lives through all life," can produce annihilation, she must *act* in opposition to herself; for the annihilation of any substance, whether it be material or immaterial, cannot be produced by a mere cessation of support, but it must be a positive action. A mere cessation of assistance will terminate *support*; but the *negation* of support, does not imply the annihilation of that substance which was supported. The suspension of support, is the negation of an action; and to suppose a mere negation, to be able to perform a positive action, is a contradiction in terms. It therefore follows, that the soul cannot perish by nature's withdrawing her support.

Natural power is not the *cause*, but the *effect* of nature. The powers of nature could not have existed antecedent to nature, it is a contradiction to suppose it: Nature must then have existed antecedent to its own existence. If natural power can only result from *matter* and *spirit*, (and without this it cannot be natural power) matter and spirit must both have existed antecedent to those powers which they produce; and, therefore, *natural power* cannot be even coeval in its *action*, with those substances on which it depends for existence. And if natural power could not exist previous to, nor be coeval with, those substances on which it depends, and which it is the power of, it necessarily follows, that no natural power can destroy the soul; and therefore, the soul must be inaccessible to annihilation. A power which is capable of acting, must certainly exist, otherwise it could not act; but to suppose a power to exist which is capable of destroying that cause on which it depends for its own existence, is a contradiction in terms.

It may, perhaps, be said, that "though no power "can destroy its own cause, yet as these powers re- "sult from distinct substances, one may annihilate "another." This, however, will be found fallacious; for how, then, can the last substance be destroyed. This, on the principle of the objection itself, is absolutely impossible: and what is impossible to one, must be equally impossible to each individual of the same physical nature.

Whatever has a perfectly physical existence, must necessarily retain it; and what retains it, cannot be annihilated; and what is not annihilated, must necessarily be immortal.

As independence is necessary to the existence of a Being thus constituted, this independence must be inseparable from, and uniformly attached to it. For to suppose a Being to have a positive existence, which is only *partially* independent, is not only to make that independent which in reality is not so, but is to destroy the identity of its Being. It must therefore, follow that a Being which *thus* exists, must not only be independent, but must be invariably so. If, then, the soul be, *invariably independent*, it must be inaccessible to all violence. If a Being, or substance, which is invariably independent, can be subjected to annihilation, the idea of its independence must be annihilated, previous to the annihilation of its Being. But to suppose an independent Being, which can lose its independence without being deprived of its existence, is a plain contradiction; and therefore, the human soul must necessarily be immortal.

SECTION III.

Whether God can create an Immaterial Substance, and cause that Substance to exist, abstracted from all Life and Consciousness, or not?

WHETHER it be possible, or not, for the Great God to create an immaterial substance, abstracted from all life and consciousness, or to deprive an immaterial substance of life and consciousnes, without annihilating the substance itself, is a point of speculation which I tremble even to approach.

It has been hinted by a celebrated writer, to whose name, since I have been acquainted with it, I have ever annexed the profoundest veneration, "that it is not much more remote from our compre-"hension to conceive that God can, if he please, "superadd to our idea of matter, a faculty of think-"ing, than that he should superadd to it *another* "*substance* with the faculty of thinking." And to this sentiment it has been replied, "that if this be "admitted, all *natural* proof of the soul's immor-"tality must be done away."

I would not have presumed to tread that hallowed ground, which is rendered almost sacred by the venerable footsteps of these great men, were not the subject of such a nature, as unavoidably to fall within my way. It is a question which suspends the mind between the demonstration of *what is*,—and the possibility of *what may be*;—and the question purely is—"Whether God can create an imma-"terial substance, and cause that substance to exist, "abstracted from all life and consciousness, or "not?" For in this the dispute finally resolves itself.

It is agreed by these great men, that matter, considered as such, does not include within it the ideas

of life and consciousness; but whether an immaterial substance can exist, abstracted from life and consciousness, is quite another question, which seems to admit of some considerable doubt.

It is very evident, that consciousness must be either an essential property of an immaterial substance, or it must be an adventitious acquisition. If it be an essential property, it is a self-evident contradiction to suppose an immaterial substance to exist after consciousness is abstracted from it, and in this case, no *such* substance can exist where consciousness is not. But if consciousness be purely adventitious, it may be separated from this immaterial substance without annihilating the substance itself: but in admitting this, we shall necessarily break down the only barrier which divides a *material* from an *immaterial* nature; and *matter* and *spirit* must then have the same denominating *negations*. If, in all immaterial substances, consciousness be the only criterion by which that which *is*, can be distinguished from that which is *not*; and this consciousness be taken away, entity and nonentity must be the same thing;—but as this is totally impossible, it seems certain, that consciousness must be essential to the very nature of an immaterial substance. And if we take off this only idea, which can certify to us the *actual* existence of such a substance, (in which this idea *must* be included) and yet admit the *possible* existence of this substance, after this idea of consciousness be annihilated, we must admit the *possible* existence of that substance, while we admit that we have *no grounds whatever* for that possibility. And this leads us immediately to this contradiction—that *we know* it to be possible, and yet do *not know* it at the same time.

If an *immaterial* substance be created, destitute of all *life* and *consciousness*, or, deprived of these properties, its real substance remaining; I would ask—Is this substance (thus deprived of life and

consciousness) *matter* or *spirit?* It is certain, that it cannot be matter, because it is *immaterial*—and it is equally certain, that it cannot be spirit, because it is destitute of that life and consciousness from whence alone spirit can be denominated: and therefore, I conclude, that *life* and *consciousness* cannot be abstracted from an immaterial substance, that substance still remaining in existence. And as matter and spirit pervade all created nature; and as every essence, and species of essence, must necessarily be included therein; and as an immaterial substance, which has neither life nor consciousness, seems to be necessarily excluded from both, it follows, with all the evidence (I conceive) that certainty can give it, that no *such* substance can be in existence; and consequently, that *life* and *consciousness* must be essential to its nature. To suppose an immaterial substance to exist, which has neither life nor consciousness, is to suppose it to be *spirit* and *not spirit*, to be *matter* and *not matter*, in the same instant.

That the Great God can create a Being, which partakes neither of matter nor spirit, is undoubtedly within the reach of Omnipotence: but such a Being, which must be at an equally physical distance from both, can have no kind of relation to either. And to suppose such a being to exist within the confines of *matter* and *spirit*, which is at an infinite distance from each and yet partakes of both, is a plain contradiction.

When, therefore, it is asked, "If God were to "create an immaterial substance, endued with con- "sciousness, could he not deprive that substance of "its consciousness, without annihilating its na- "ture?" I confess I feel some hesitation in assenting to the proposition. With all deference to so great a man, I humbly conceive, that—to resolve all into God's Omnipotency, is not giving the question a fair statement.

The question rather is—"Can an immaterial sub-"stance, endued with life and consciousness, survive "a privation of them, without undergoing such an "alteration as must affect its identity?" If it cannot, the case is decided; but if it can, it must have suffered a privation, and yet remain entire—or, in other words, it must have undergone a change, and yet not have sustained any alteration in the identity of its nature at the same time: and how such a change can take place in a substance which is devoid of all parts, I confess I have not acuteness enough to discover. If any substance, under any modification whatsoever, be identified, not only the permanent primary qualities of it must be ascertained, but its secondary qualities also; for whatsoever that be, which denominates *identity* in any given substance, the same denominations are essentially necessary to its *recognition*. It is this stability of the denominating qualities, which can alone divide identity from diversity, and ascertain to us that it is the same, and not another. If, then, the physical identity of substances be denominated from their real existence, not only the primary qualities, but the secondary also, must remain; because the secondary, resulting from the primary qualities, must depend upon their stability for their own existence; and where the secondary qualities of any substance are not the same, it is an undeniable proof, that the primary qualities of that *substance* are changed also, and consequently that its identity is totally destroyed. And, therefore, whether we consider consciousness to belong to the primary or secondary qualities of an immaterial substance, in either case, a privation of it must affect the identity of the substance itself; and that real or nominal essence which ascertained its identity, eluding all recognition, demonstrates that the primary identity of the substance is annihilated by the change.

These observations will, I conceive, apply to *all substances* in general; but when we particularly apply them to one that is immaterial, they acquire a more vigorous energy.

An immaterial substance can have no parts,—it is a contradiction to suppose it: and what has no parts, can, in its *nature*, undergo no modification; and what can undergo no modification, can never lose its identity. If, then, consciousness be an essential property of this substance, it can never be lost; if it be only adventitious, it can never be connate with, nor exist in it, by inhesion. If consciousness be a primary quality of an immaterial substance, it is impossible that it can be separated from it, unless the identity of that substance be annihilated. If it be a secondary quality, it must depend upon the stability of the primary ones for its existence; and while these primary qualities remain, consciousness must continue. And, if to destroy a primary quality of any substance, be to annihilate the identity of that substance, it certainly must follow, that consciousness cannot be separated from any immaterial substance, but that if the substance remain, consciousness must continue for ever.

If all consciousness be purely *adventitious*, an immaterial substance may exist without it, and there can, then, be no such thing as a *real* conscious Being in nature; consciousness, then, cannot be *necessary* to the existence of spirit; and an *animated, conscious Being*, may exist without *animation* or *consciousness*.

If consciousness be only adventitious, and not an essential property of an immaterial substance, I would ask—If God were to take away this consciousness, by what can the actual existence of the substance be ascertained? And will not all distinction between entity and nonentity be done away? And if so, must not entity and nonentity be the same thing? And is not the supposition of entity and nonentity

being the same, a positive contradiction? And must not this contradiction be the necessary result of admitting consciousness to be annihilated, while the substance remains? And, if so, must not Mr. *Locke*'s conclusions be wrong? *

If God were to create an immaterial substance, abstracted from all life and consciousness, must not that substance be imperfect? And is not an *imperfect substance* the *negation* of a substance? If it be imperfect, can it as a *substance*, possibly exist? If such a substance be not imperfect, must not life and consciousness be superfluous to its physical nature? And if superfluous, must not the inhesion of a conscious quality destroy its physical identity? And if its perfection be destroyed, can its physical nature remain? But if its physical identity be not destroyed nor altered, either by the *inhesion* or *abstraction* of life and consciousness, must not life and consciousness be a nonentity?

Can any quality incorporate with a simple substance, which is not essential to the nature of that substance (and which of itself can have no abstract existence) without altering the nature or identity of that substance? If it can, this contradiction must then follow—that the substance is different from what it was before, and not different at the same time; if it cannot, this conscious quality must have a positive existence independent of that substance in which it is supposed to inhere; and the idea of any other immaterial substance is a mere creature of the imagination. On the whole, if a substance, which undergoes no change, can be conscious at one time, and unconscious at another, the supposition includes within it this gross contradiction—that it is altered,

* See Mr. Locke's words, quoted in page 182, 184, and 185, of this work.

and yet not altered at the same time; I therefore conclude, that consciousness must be essential to its nature.

If God were to create an immaterial substance, devoid of all consciousness, it is certain, that consciousness can be no way essential to its nature.—And if this consciousness itself, cannot exist, abstracted from this immaterial substance; and this substance be naturally destitute of it, how can an union between this *substance* and *quality*, call into existence, an energy of which both are totally destitute? If it can, then both quality and substance must confer an energy which is possessed by neither, which is a contradiction; if not, consciousness must be essential to its existence. An immaterial substance, which has neither life nor consciousness, can have no known property, either of *matter* or *spirit*; and to place it under the denomination of either, is an equal contradiction, with the supposition of its being removed from both.

SECTION IV.

The Soul is a simple Essence, and cannot perish; neither can its essential Properties—An Objection answered—The Properties of Perception and Consciousness are physically united with the Substance of the Soul—Even the physical Nature of Matter remains incorruptible and entire.

THAT the human soul is a simple essence, has been already proved; and if so, it must follow, that it cannot perish. A simple essence can be but one, and nothing but this can be a conscious Being. If an essence, which is in existence, be perishable in its own nature, it must be because it is defective; and an essence which is simple, and is supposed to

be defective in its own nature, seems to include this contradiction, that it is an essence, and not an essence at the same time. An essence, which is *simple* in its own nature, can include within it nothing but what is necessary to its own existence; for to admit any thing to be included in a simple essence, which is not necessary to the existence of that essence, is to annihilate its *simplicity*, in order to establish its nature, and does, in fact, destroy that very essence which is supposed to exist, abstracted from all extraneous properties. And if nothing can be included within this *essence*, but what is necessary to the existence of it; to suppose this essence, or any property of it, to be perishable in its nature, is to suppose that *what* is thus perishable, *is necessary*, and yet *not necessary* to the existence of the soul at the same time, which is a plain contradiction.

As an exclusion of all foreign acquirements is necessary to our idea of the soul's *simplicity*, nothing that is either hostile or foreign to its nature, can ever have access unto it; and what possesses in itself no perishable quality, and through the *pure simplicity* of its nature excludes all diversity, must necessarily be immortal.

As no physical essence can be defective, and as one that is not defective, must necessarily exclude all diversity; as nothing but a simple substance like this can be capable of thinking, it is certain, that as man is a conscious Being, he must possess this *physically pure and simple substance*, which, in its own nature must be distinct from, and independent of, all corporeal Being; and with which, extension and figure can have no affinity or relation.

We have now before us, an essence which is physically simple, and which can include within it, noting but what is necessary to its own exist-

ence; and the great question is—Can such an essence be perishable in its nature?

It is a self-evident proposition, that what is *simple* in its own nature, can have no parts; and what has no parts, can never lose them; and what has nothing which it can lose, can admit nothing to incorporate with its essence, while its simple nature remains; and what has nothing which it can either acquire or lose, can never be affected by modification. And to suppose an *essence*, which has nothing which it can either acquire or lose, to be capable of perishing, we must first suppose an annihilation of its *simplicity*, previous to the annihilation of its *Being*, which includes this contradiction, that it *is in existence*, and *is not in existence*, at the same time. And as a contradiction cannot be admitted, the soul must be imperishable in its nature.

A Being, which continues simple, must be the same to-day that it was yesterday; and must be exactly the same to-morrow, for the same reason; and while this *physical simplicity* remains, it must continue the same forever. And to imagine the annihilation of its *simplicity*, as preparatory to the annihilation of its *Being*, is to imagine the annihilation of its identity, and not the annihilation of it, at the same time.

As the continuance of every property of a simple substance, is necessary to the duration of its Being, it is certain that none of these properties can be lost. The properties which such a simple nature possesses, are, and must be, necessary to its existence; and the separation of them from another, is the annihilation of its Being; but if the separation of these properties be impossible, it is certain, that this substance must remain perpetually the same.

The common principle in which these properties inhere, must be a something distinct in idea and in

reality, from either of these properties, considered in themselves; which, taken in the aggregate, are essential to the existence of this substance. And though the idea which we form of this substance, be distinct from those which we form of the properties of this substance, yet the latter being necessarily included in the former, demonstratively precludes the possibility of their separation, and proves that union, without which, the idea of substance itself can have no kind of existence. If, then, the soul can perish, every property which is essential to its existence, must expire; and if each individual property expire, each individual property must be capable of perishing. But as it is a contradiction to suppose, that any essential property of any substance can perish, while that substance remains, so it is impossible that this substance can perish, unless its essential properties expire, to the existence of which these properties are necessary.

If the properties of the soul be imperishable in their own natures, because inseparable from one another, how can they acquire a perishing nature by inhering in one common principle? Can the whole of that substance perish, of which no property can expire? Or if the inhesion of these properties be necessary to their own existence, *can* mere *inhesion* destroy, what *without inhesion* can have no existence? If *inhesion* be necessary to the existence of these properties, can it be made the vehicle of their annihilation? If it can, *inhesion* must be necessary, and yet not necessary to the existence of these properties; if not, the whole must necessarily be immortal.

It is a self-evident proposition, that no property which is essential to the existence of any substance, can perish while that substance remains: and it is equally self-evident, that this substance, to the existence of which these properties are essential, can-

not perish unless these properties expire. If, then, this substance, and the properties of this substance, be alike necessary to the existence of each other; if these properties cannot expire while the substance remains; and if the substance must remain until its essential properties perish,—it follows, that the human soul *must* be immortal.

I am well aware, that to the energy of this argument it will be objected, "that this is arguing in a "circle,—that it is making two ideas mutually to "depend for support on one another, while neither of "them, can communicate that assistance to each "other, which they mutually want." I have no doubt, that in all compounded bodies, this objection would be of force; but it must be remembered, that this is not a question about the *identity and diversity of body*, but about the *entity and nonentity of Being*. It has been abundantly proved, that the soul is a physically pure and uncompounded substance; and what is physically simple, can be (as to its essence) neither the subject of accidents nor modes :—And what is not the subject of either, precludes, through the very nature of its Being, that adventitious support, from which, if we separate compounded bodies, they can have no existence.

The two faculties of *perception* and *consciousness*,* are necessary to our conception of that sub-

* I think it necessary to inform the reader, that wherever the term "*Consciousness*" has occurred from page 182 to this place, I have used it to express that faculty which we possess, and which I have been endeavoring to prove to be an essential property of the soul: under this particular consideration, the activity of that faculty is quite remote from the point in hand. Whether this faculty be continually active, or whether its activity be occasionally suspended, is quite a distinct question, which I have considered in a former part of this Essay. All that I here contend for, is,—that an immaterial substance

stance in which they inhere; though the abstract idea of that substance is distinct in point of *existence*, but not of *nature*, from either. The support which these properties *derive* from their substance; and the support which the substance itself derives from those properties that are necessary to its existence, are neither *adventitious* nor *moral*, but they are *physical* and *absolutely necessary* to each other's Being. And where the simple properties which are necessary to the formation of our ideas of immaterial substances, are founded in those substances; they afford to each other a certainty of support, not by any mutual dependence, but through an inseparable and necessary co-existence. And, therefore, as the soul is a physically pure and simple essence and as no simple essence can perish, its immortality arises, not only from the co-essentiality of its properties and substance, but from the apparent impossibility of its being otherwise than what it is.

And even matter itself notwithstanding the various forms which it is capable of assuming, must be permanent in its primary nature; and although new forms are for ever attendant on the internal combinations of particles, and the external disposition of surfaces; and though these forms rise and perish in fleeting succession to one another, while the mere superficial observer is presented with nothing but portions of matter, which present their forms, and then disappear; the discerning eye penetrates deeper into the recesses of nature, and explores in those recesses, substances, which can neither expire nor change. For although all particles of matter, by

with a faculty of thinking or consciousness, cannot lose this faculty, and yet retain its identity and nature; but, that the instant we suppose this faculty to be annihilated, that very instant it must cease to be an immaterial substance.

arrangement, configuration, and variable combinations, be subject to every modification of which their nature is capable, yet it is certain, that those particles which are thus arranged, figured, and combined, must be, in themselves, of a more permanent nature.—The existence of all matter must be confined within the limits of its nature, beyond the boundaries of which it cannot pass. If, then, we suppose any given particle to be so reduced by divisibility on the one hand, that it is no longer capable of separation, and so bounded on the other, by the limits of its nature, that it cannot pass from what it is, to what it is not; we at once behold it in a state of permanency, which is imposed upon it through the necessity of things; and we behold it at once incapable of mutation or decay.

In this state of physical permanency, it is very certain, that no single atom which is at once in Being, can be lost. It may be diversified in a thousand forms; it may assume a variety of attitudes, and form new combinations with other particles, with which it had no previous association; but this can only affect its modification. It is still the same under every form; and modes and accidents will leave it perfect matter still. And if modes and accidents can only affect the configuration of its parts; and if the certainty of its nature exists, independent of all these mutations, even matter itself must be imperishable in its nature.

If, then, the physical nature of matter remain entire and incorruptible, upon what principle can we suppose an immaterial substance to expire? The same incorruptibility which is attached to the former, must necessarily be attached to the latter. And although an union may subsist between that which is *material*, and that which is *immaterial*, yet this union can no more affect the identity of the one,

than it can affect the identity of the other; which, with each other, can have no *physical* connexion.

SECTION V.

The Soul is naturally independent, and cannot be approached by created Power—It cannot be separated, because of its Unity—The inherence of its Properties is not a Medium of Annihilation—It cannot lose its essential Properties, nor expire with them in one Act of Annihilation.

WHATEVER is a *simple* essence, can be dependent for its existence on no created power, and what is dependent on no created power must be *naturally* independent. We know of nothing which can claim this privilege but *matter* and *spirit:* and whatsoever is thus naturally independent, must be incapable of receiving obstructions or violations, from any intrinsic cause; and to admit the interference of any external influence, is utterly inconsistent with the ideas of its unity and independence, if its unity and independence be admitted, (which necessarily must) all external influence must be prevented from approaching it, by a necessary exclusion.

If, therefore, the soul be incapable of being approached, because of its independence; and incapable of undergoing a separation, if approached, because of its *unity*, it must necessarily be immortal.

If the properties of the soul can have no existence, abstracted from their *inherence* in an immaterial substance; (and that they cannot, has been already proved) *inherence* must be necessary to their existence; and if *inherence* be necessary to their existence, it is a contradiction in terms, to suppose that *inherence* can ever be made the *medium* of their annihilation; for if *inherence* can be made the medium of their annihilation, *inherence* must be ne-

cessary to their existence, and not necessary at the same time. To suppose these properties to perish, abstracted from their *inherence* in a substance, is utterly impossible; and to suppose them to perish through its *instrumentality*, or its being a medium of it, is a plain contradiction; and, therefore, the human soul must necessarily partake of immortality.

If the soul lose not its essential properties, it is utterly impossible that it should expire; and if it lose them, it is necessary (in order to our knowledge of the fact) that we ascertain its loss; but to ascertain its loss, is not only to ascertain a point which we admit to have no existence, but is to identify an absolute nonentity. If the soul lose its essential properties, it must be in one of these three ways;—either *before* its *annihilation*, in the *act of annihilation*, or, *subsequent upon that annihilation*; there is no other way within the reach of possibility.

To admit the first case, is to suppose that the soul can, and does, survive the expiration of those properties which are essentially necessary to its existence; and then we must admit these properties to be necessary, and not necessary at the same time.

To admit the second case, is to suppose that those properties may be *separated* from the soul, which are *inseparable* from it:—and that every property which is essential to the existence of the soul, must be possessed by it in that *moment* of duration in which they are separated from it, and in which they expire. For if the soul be not possessed of these properties in the *moment* of its annihilation, it can never lose them, nor be the subject of annihilation; and if it be possessed of them, it cannot perish. If the mere *extinction* of all these properties be the *identical act* of the soul's annihilation, the soul must perish without being separated from any thing which is essential to its nature; or *sustaining the loss* of any thing which is necessary to its existence, which

of itself is a contradiction. A simple Being, which is in the possession of all its essential properties, is not extinct; and one that is not in such possession, has no existence. If consciousness be an essential property of any Being, that Being cannot expire while this consciousness remains; and if that Being expire, which this consciousness is an essential property of, consciousness itself must expire previous to the annihilation of that Being. Unless this be admitted, the Being itself must be imperishable in its nature; it being a contradiction to suppose any Being to expire, without being detached from those properties which denominate and certify its existence. But if consciousness be an essential property, the idea of its being detached from that substance which it is necessary to the existence of, includes this contradiction, that it is essential, and not essential, at the same time.

To admit the third case, is to suppose that an essential property can survive the annihilation of that substance, to the existence of which, this property is necessary, and with which it must be co-essential.—To conceive, therefore, that the soul, which is a simple essence, can be *separated from itself*, is utterly impossible; and to suppose it to perish without such separation, is a contradiction: and, therefore, no simple essence can perish.

If, then, for the soul to lose its essential properties, be absolutely impossible; and if to expire without losing them be a contradiction; there remains nothing to be considered, but whether the soul, together with all its essential properties, can expire together *in one act of annihilation*.

It is very certain, that nothing can act before it has a Being; and if so, the soul cannot possibly perish through annihilation as its cause. Annihilation can certainly have no Being while the soul is in existence; and, therefore, the non-existence of

the soul is necessary to the existence of our idea or notion of its annihilation. And if annihilation can have no Being until the soul be reduced to an entire nonentity, it is absolutely certain, that the soul can never be thus reduced by that annihilation, which cannot exist, even in idea, until the soul be perfectly destroyed.

If annihilation could destroy the soul, it must act before it had any kind of existence, which is a flat contradiction. The nonexistence of the soul, is necessary to our idea of its annihilation; and, therefore, the soul must be destroyed before it can be said to be annihilated. And if the soul be thus destroyed before we can have any conception of annihilation, annihilation can never be the cause of its destruction.

If the soul perish through annihilation, and the total *nonentity* of the soul be necessary to the idea of annihilation, the effect must have an existence prior to that cause which called it into Being; and the effect of this cause must be completed before the cause which completed it can have any kind of existence; the absurdity of which is too manifest to be refuted.

If the destruction of the soul be that which gives annihilation birth, annihilation must come too late to effect that purpose for which it is supposed to BE; for if the total *absence of Being* in the soul be necessary to our conception of *annihilation*, the soul can never perish through that annihilation, of which we can form no conception until the soul be destroyed. But if the predestruction of the soul be necessary to the notion of its annihilation,—and if, without this previous destruction, it be impossible to form any idea of its annihilation; we behold, on both sides of the question, the most palpable contradictions.

For if, on the one hand, the soul be destroyed previous to the completion of its annihilation,—and

if this utter loss of Being be necessary to our idea of annihilation,—the soul must be annihilated previous to its annihilation, and must be reduced to a nonentity, in order to the birth of that annihilation which is supposed to produce it,—the absurdity of which every reader must discover. If, on the other hand, we view the opposite member of the alternative, and conceive that no such predestruction of the soul is necessary to the idea of its annihilation; and that annihilation may take place upon it, without first conceiving and annexing to it the utter loss of Being; we must behold annihilation, while nothing is annihilated; and we must conceive the utter loss of that very Being, which we behold in existence; the absurdity of which needs no further pursuit. And as the contradiction is equal on each side, it must follow, as an immoveable consequence—that the soul cannot perish through annihilation.

SECTION VI.

No Act of Annihilation can destroy the Soul—Objection that the utter Privation of Being is the annihilating Act, considered.

THE certain and actual *existence* * of an action, must necessarily precede all effects which can result from that action; and if so, the soul can never be destroyed by that action through which it is sup-

* I here use the word "*existence*," in preference to the word "*completion*," as being more expressive of that idea which I wish to convey. In an action (if such there be) which does not include progression, the word *completion* might convey an erroneous idea; and yet so much are we accustomed to these actions which apply to compounded bodies, that we feel it difficult to find words that are exactly adequate to those ideas which we wish to ex-

posed to be annihilated. For if the actual annihilation of the soul be necessary to the existence of the *annihilating act*, the annihilating act can never be the *occasion* of the soul's annihilation. The annihilation of the soul being necessary to the existence of this supposed action, the action itself can never produce that annihilation, upon which this action itself depends for its own existence; and, therefore, no act of annihilation can ever destroy the soul.

Whether the idea of an action be *real* or *relative*, it is only the actual existence of that action, which can give to the mind any idea of its Being,—it is a contradiction to suppose otherwise. But if the actual existence of an action, be necessary to the existence of any thing which can result from that action, the soul can never perish by an annihilating

press. In compliance, therefore, with our customary modes of speaking, I have, in the following pages, occasionally introduced the word *completion*, not from any conviction of its strict propriety, but from a difficulty in making the word *existence* to be understood to include completion, when it applies to an action through which an immaterial substance is supposed to perish. That the word *completion* implies *progression* and previous *incompletion*, I readily admit, and for that reason I consider the word inapplicable to the case in hand. For since an immaterial substance can have no *parts*, the action which destroys it, can have no *progression*. There can be no room for a progressive action in that substance which has neither interior nor surface ;....progression can never *apply* to that to which it is *inapplicable*. I have said, in page 180, that "*that* which destroys the soul, must be a "positive action ;" but how an action can possibly exist, which *excludes* progression, I believe it is impossible to conceive. That the idea of an action which *excludes* progression, *includes* a contradiction, is not difficult to prove; which will afford us another evidence that no such action can possibly exist ;....and, consequently, that the human soul must be immortal.

ct. For if we suppose the soul to perish by an *anni-ilating act;* and admit that nothing can result from n action, until the action certainly exists; we must uppose the soul to be annihilated, previous to the xistence of that *annihilating act*, by which it is sup-osed to be destroyed.

As no cause whatever can produce any effect, un-l that cause is in actual existence, the act of anni-ilation, through which the soul is supposed to pe-ish, must have a certainty of existence, previous o that annihilation which it is supposed to produce, —it is a contradiction in terms to suppose otherwise. ut if the certainty of the existence of that action, e necessary to the annihilation of the soul, we must uppose the existence of this action antecedent to the oul's annihilation, which is a contradiction also; and, herefore, since no such thing as an annihilating act an possibly exist, the human soul must necessarily be mmortal.

To admit the soul to be annihilated previous to s annihilation, is a self-evident contradiction. To uppose it to be annihilated by an action which of it-elf cannot exist until the soul be actually by an ac-on deprived of Being, is to make an action to pro-uce effects previous to its own existence. And to uppose the soul to perish subsequent upon its own nnihilation, is an absurdity too gross to be refuted. nd if the soul can neither perish previous to the ct of annihilation, nor subsequent upon it, the self-vident result is—that it must necessarily be *immor-al.*

It may, perhaps, be said, "that the utter priva-tion of Being, is the annihilating act." But that uch an act of privation can possibly exist, I must onfess I have considerable doubts. For if noth-g can be said to be annihilated, but what has suf-red the utter loss of Being, instead of admitting he *act of privation* to be that which destroys the

soul, the *total privation of Being* must be necessary to our idea of that *act of privation* through which the soul is supposed to be destroyed. And, therefore, the *perfect completion* of the action, is not only necessary to our idea of that action, but to that effect also, which the objection attributes to the action while in a progressive state, and which the action is supposed to produce, before it can be said perfectly to exist itself. *Total privation* cannot be said to exist until the soul is perfectly destroyed; and that act can never destroy the soul, which cannot be said to be in Being, until the soul is no more; for it is the total extinction of the soul which alone can give *complete existence* to that act, by which the objection supposes it to be destroyed. For if the privation of Being be that very act which terminates in *complete annihilation*, the soul can never perish through that act of privation, which can have no complete existence, neither in idea, nor in reality, until the soul is perfectly destroyed.

If the existence of an action be necessary to the existence of itself, which no man can deny, the action which is supposed to accomplish any event, must necessarily exist in the order of nature, before that event can be accomplished by it. But in admitting this conclusion, we shall be obliged to admit the existence of an annihilating act, while we admit nothing to be annihilated by it; and the soul will then be admitted by us to be annihilated, and not annihilated at the same time. If, on the other hand, we reject this conclusion, and adopt the opposite member of the alternative, we shall then be driven to this conclusion—that an action may exist before it has any existence—and, that the soul itself may be annihilated by an action, which cannot have any kind of existence itself, until the soul is perfectly reduced to nothing by it.

To suppose the privation of Being to be that act hrough which the soul is reduced to nothing, while ne perfect *nonentity* of the soul is necessary to the xistence of the act of privation and is that, from whence both privation and annihilation are denomiated; is to make the idea of the act of annihilation o exist antecedent to that perfect nonentity of Being, rom whence alone annihilation can be denominated; hich is an evident contradiction. And to suppose ne soul to be annihilated by an action which is *not* n annihilating one, is to attribute to that action an ffect which is precluded by its very name and naure;—the soul to be annihilated by an *action*, which s not an annihilating one, is a plain contradiction in erms. Can any effect result from an action, before hat action has a Being? If there can, an effect ust be produced by that which has no existence; there cannot, no act of annihilation can destroy ne soul; and that which cannot be destroyed by an ct of annihilation, must necessarily be immortal.

If, then, the soul cannot be annihilated, either by hat is supposed to be an annihilating act, or by an ct which is not an annihilating one, nor abstracted rom either, the plain consequence is—that no such ing as annihilation (according to those modes of easoning which God has placed within the reach f human intelligence) can possibly take place; and, herefore, the soul can never perish by it. And that hich is not placed within the reach of annihilation, ust necessarily be immortal

I am well aware, that to this mode of reasoning will be objected—"that if the mode of reasoning which I have adopted in the preceding pages, be admitted, it will amount to a total denial of all possible action." This, however, I conceive, upon more minute survey, will be found to be an erroeous conclusion. Confined as we are within the rcle of compounded bodies, a strange association

of ideas has led us to apply the modes of dividing compounded bodies to the annihilation of simple substances, though the actions, which are peculiar to each, can have but little or no relation to one another.

That all human actions include *progression* in their very nature, is a truth, which, I believe, no one will attempt to deny; and the admission of this principle will prove to us a decisive difference between those actions which apply to the division of compounded bodies, and those which apply to the annihilation of an immaterial substance.

Let us suppose, for instance, the action of my hand, with which I am now writing,—it is an action which includes *progression*; but the action through which I am now writing, though it may be said to exist, yet it cannot be said to be a *complete book-writing action* until the book is completed; for it is the completion of the book which can alone *denominate* it to be a *complete book-writing action*. But if, in the midst of my writing, the action of my hand be suspended, the action is only *complete* in an exact proportion to the quantity which I have written; and it is from this partial completion of the book alone, that the action can then be denominated. But where the *subject* under consideration is so *simple* in its nature, that the idea of *progression* must necessarily be excluded from the action,—there these actions will not apply,—there no medium can possibly exist between *perfect* annihilation and *perfect* existence.

If we again suppose the existence of an action, through which an *apple* is divided into two equal parts, the action can only be *complete* in proportion to the quantity divided; but it is the total separation of its parts, which can alone denominate the action to be a *complete apple-dividing* action. But whether we admit the progress which this action has made, to be partial or complete, it is the progress of the division alone, which can determine the specific quan-

tity of the action which exists. In an action which applies to the division of compounded bodies, the action may be said to *exist* before it is *complete;* but in an action which is supposed to annihilate an immaterial substance, there can be no medium whatever between *existence* and *completion.* And as, in the order of nature, the action must exist before the soul can be annihilated by it; and as the annihilation of the soul can alone denominate it to be an annihilating act, certain it is, that if the soul perish, it must perish by an action which is not an annihilating one. But in admitting the soul to be annihilated by an action, which is not an annihilating one, we admit a palpable contradiction; and attribute to the action, an effect, which must be *excluded* from it, both by its name and nature.

An Apple may be partially divided; this Book may be partially written; and in either case the action may be suspended in this partial state; but when we apply any action to the annihilation of the soul, no such medium of suspension can possibly be admitted. Between *existence* and *nonexistence* there can be no medium, because there is nothing which can be divided; and where there is nothing which can be divided, there the action which applies can know no distinction between *beginning*, *progression*, and *end.* Simple *existence* must comprehend and encircle all.

If the action, through which an immaterial substance is supposed to be annihilated, be of the same nature with those actions through which compounded bodies are divided, it is certain, that such an action must include *progression;* unless this be admitted, the actions cannot be alike. But if an annihilating act be admitted to include *progression*, I would ask,—If in the progressive state of this annihilating act, God were to suspend this action, would the soul be annihilated or not? It is very certain, in

this case, that it could be neither. It is certain, that the soul cannot be in existence, because an action has so far passed upon it, as to be denominated an *annihilating* one; and it is equally certain that the soul cannot be reduced to a nonentity, because that action has been suspended, through which its perfect annihilation could be alone accomplished; and how a simple Being, which has no parts, can be partially annihilated, and partially in existence, I must leave for those to decide who can reconcile contradictions.

It may, perhaps, be said—"that in compounded "bodies, there can be no medium between *division* "and no division,—that an *apple* must be either "sound or injured." The truth of these positions I readily admit; but I still contend, that the action which produces an injury, must include *progression*. Unable, as we are, through the want of acuter organs, to penetrate the minuter parts of compounded bodies, we must content ourselves with that evidence which analogy supplies.

If the division of *two* particles, in any given portion of matter, can be accomplished by an action which has no progression, *four* may be divided in the same manner, and for the same reason; and we may extend the same principle, even to the division of the *Globe*. In the division of larger bodies, progression becomes visible, because it is more suited to our perception; but the *progression* of all actions which divide compounded bodies, must be in exact proportion to the quantity of matter which is divided. As an action which divides a world, includes progression, progression must be included in that action also which divides an apple; and progression must continue, so long as *parts* are included in the thing divided. But where there are no *parts*, there can be no *progression*; and where there is no progression, there can be no *action*; and where there is no action, nothing can suffer by it. An action, there-

ore, which includes progression, cannot apply to an immaterial substance; and an action which does not include progression, is a contradiction in terms. I therefore conclude;—that since all those actions with which we are surrounded, must include progression, because they apply to compounded bodies; and since an action, which includes progression, cannot apply to an immaterial substance, because it is uncompounded; the soul can never perish by any such action as those with which we are acquainted; and must, therefore, be immortal.

SECTION VII.

The loss of Existence is necessary to the Idea of the Privation of Being—The extinguishing Act cannot be Privation. It is absurd to suppose the Pre-existence of the Actor that destroys the Being of the Soul—There can be no Evidence of the fact of Annihilation—From the Mass of Evidence, the Author is fully satisfied that the Human Soul must necessarily be IMMORTAL.

NOR will it be of any avail, to exclude the term "annihilation." The same reasonings which preclude the term, will equally apply to any action, which includes within it the loss of Being. Nothing that is in existence, can be said to be deprived of existence, while that existence remains—it is a contradiction to suppose it. And if nothing can be *deprived* of Being while it is in existence, the loss of existence must be necessary to the idea of that *privation*. And if the idea of privation can have no existence, until the utter loss of Being denominates privation of Being to *exist*; that *extinction of Being*, which is supposed to be effected by privation, must necessarily *precede* the exist-

ence of the idea of privation. And if *this* idea (of privation of Being) be necessarily preceded by *that* of the *extinction* of Being, from whence this privation is denominated; the idea of privation must necessarily be excluded from entering into the production of *that nonentity*, from the completion of which alone, the certainty of privation can be called into existence.

If the perfect *nonentity* of Being be not necessary to the certainty of privation, privation may exist, although the Being remain entire; and then the conclusion will be,—that privation is not necessary to its own existence. But if the perfect *nonentity* of Being, be necessary to the certainty of the *privation of Being*, the extinguishing act cannot be this privation.

To suppose *privation of Being* to be the identical act of annihilation, the completion of which is necessary to the existence of the very idea of privation, is to make *privation* to exist *antecedently* to its own existence. For as the completion of the act, is necessary to the idea of *the act of privation of Being*, the thing itself can never contribute towards its own existence.

An action necessarily supposes the pre-existence of the actor. The supposition, therefore, that the soul can perish, either through "annihilation,"—"the privation * of Being,"—"the utter loss of existence," or any term of synonymous import; conceives either or each of these ideas,—to have an *action* in that very *ruin* of the soul, upon *which* each idea necessarily depends for its existence. And to suppose either of these ideas thus to act, is to make

* It may not be unnecessary to say,—that from page 201. to the conclusion of the work, I have used the word *privation*, as being synonymous with *annihilation*.

them contribute to their own Being, and to act before either could possibly have any kind of existence.

And even if any substance be annihilated, to be certified of the fact, its annihilation must be ascertained. And to ascertain its annihilation, something must survive the annihilated substance, which bears some relation to it; and if any such *relation* survive, the existence of this relation, which is supposed to ascertain the annihilation of that substance which it is the relation of, will sufficiently demonstrate that no such annihilation has taken place. And if nothing can ascertain the fact, it can never be known, although annihilation were possible.

The mere *absence of Being*, can never be a proof of the annihilation of Being, while the infinitude of space is too great for finite comprehension: and *mere absence*, is all that can possibly survive the annihilation of any substance.

If any Being be admitted to be annihilated, there must be some evidence to support the mind in the belief of the certainty of that nonentity of Being which it adopts; and the only possible evidence which it can have, must be the *total absence of all Being*; which evidence can never be obtained by created Beings, till a finite mind can pervade an infinite expansion, which is impossible, because it is a contradiction. And if annihilation can never be known, unless the knowledge of it be supported by evidence; if the only possible evidence, be the mere absence of all Being; If the total absence of all Being can never be ascertained until a finite mind can grasp what is infinite; and if to grasp infinity be a contradiction; it necessarily follows, that the *possibility* of annihilation can never be known, even admitting that it were a fact.

Annihilation can never be admitted, where there is no evidence to support the mind in that belief; and the admission of evidence must necessarily contradict that fact which it is designed to prove and establish.

And, therefore, from this mass of evidence, drawn purely from the fountain-head of nature, uncorrupted by literary prejudices, and unshackled by any bias of education, fully satisfied I am, that the human soul must necessarily be IMMORTAL.

FINIS.

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